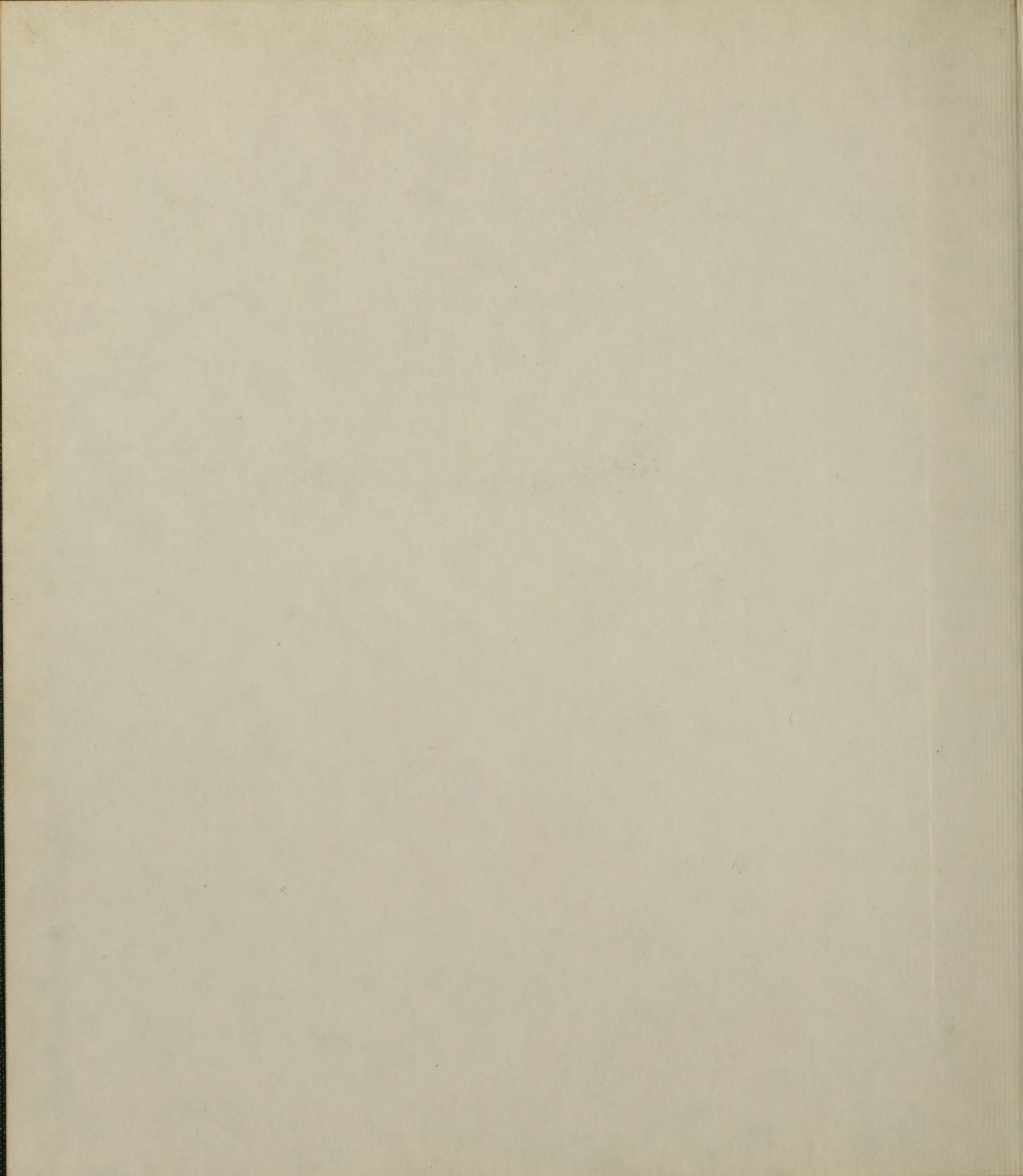


SP 1988
\$4.88



WASHINGTON

DESIGN OF THE FEDERAL CITY



PLAN
of the CITY of
Washington
(in the Territory of Columbia,
ceded by the States of
VIRGINIA and MARYLAND
to the
United States of America,
and by them established as the
SEAT of their GOVERNMENT,
after the Year
MDCCC.

Designed by Thomas L. Vallance. Published 1879.



WASHINGTON

DESIGN OF THE FEDERAL CITY



The National Archives and Records Service
Washington, 1981



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The City of Washington is known throughout the world for its beauty and charm. The visitors who come to the capital each year can hardly imagine that it was once a desolate place. Washington developed slowly, and from the beginning its history was unlike that of any other city. Its character was planned and the design drawn long before it acquired enough people and buildings to make it worthy of the name National Capital. But a city established with high ideals can not ignore its heritage forever. Washington changed, expanded—and ultimately became an international center of power. This book illustrates the city's transformation with photographs, maps, sketches and designs. Most of the items are from the records of the National Archives. The legends to those illustrations that are from the holdings of the National Archives include a file number. Inquiries concerning these maps and photographs should be addressed to the proper custodial unit and should include these numbers.



George Town and Federal City, or City of Washington. Drawn by George Beck, Philadelphia. Engraved by T. Cartwright, London. Published by Atkins & Nightingale, Philadelphia, June 1, 1801. Library of Congress. *At right*, Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant (1754-1825). Imaginative portrait by Leon Chatelain; medallion on Riggs National Bank, Chevy Chase, Maryland.



he concept of a Federal City, born amid the struggles of revolution, grew as the American states formed their new government. The Continental Congresses which represented thirteen separate colonies in their protests against England had no single established meeting place. During the war for independence the menacing approach of the British army forced delegates to assemble in eight different cities and towns. The defeat of Great Britain eliminated the fear for their personal security, but independence bolstered the desire for a capital enhancing the dignity for the new nation. In 1787, as delegates to the Constitutional Convention federal charter, they realized that the government also needed a permanent location. Many sites were considered, but on one point the delegates finally agreed: the city must be as unique as the nation. Removed from the Sovereignty of any state, the capital would belong to all the people.

Under the Constitution, Congress received exclusive jurisdiction "over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States . . . become the Seat of Government of the United States." Almost immediately each state began competing to have the Federal City established within its

borders. Trenton, Williamsburg, New York City, and Wright's Ferry on the Susquehanna River were all proposed. New York State offered ten miles square anywhere within its territory; Virginia and Maryland countered with a joint offer of land on the Potomac. Congress, however, required that the capital be centrally located on a navigable

river far enough inland for protection. The alternatives thus reduced to sites

on the Susquehanna and the Potomac continued to be debated

until 1790 when a political compromise decided the fate of the national capital. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson persuaded northern congressional

members to accept a southern capital in exchange for southern support

of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton's scheme for

financing the national debt. the resulting Residence Act of July 16, 1790, allotted ten years to prepare the Federal City; during this time the government would be located in Philadelphia. Although the act designated a Potomac site, it did not define the actual capital boundaries. These were left to the discretion of President George Washington, whose plantation Mount Vernon was also on the Potomac. The chief executive was well acquainted with the area, and it was not difficult for him to select the best grounds for the Federal City.





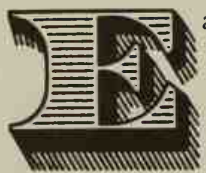
he area considered by the president was suitable in every respect. A century earlier the first settlers arriving with title deeds from King Charles had recognized the beauty and potential of the Potomac valley. The indians who once camped on what is now Capitol Hill introduced the Englishmen to tobacco, and a profitable trade developed along the river's banks. By the turn of the eighteenth century the area was dotted with estates fancifully named Duddington Pasture, Widow's Mite, Mexico, and Jamaica. Another tract was dubbed Rome, while Goose Creek wandering through it was popularly called the Tiber. Significant roads from north and south converged on the Potomac shore where hogsheads of tobacco were rolled to wharves and warehouses. The Virginia landowners who had long dreamed of making the Potomac a commercial highway established the port Belhaven, later renamed Alexandria, in 1730. The competitive Maryland proprietors responded with their own port of George Town, which quickly grew to be an elegant little community. Ships landing at her wharves brought furniture and luxuries reminiscent of the stately homes of London. By 1790 the area was a center of trade and population. The rolling hills once covered with forests were broken by tobacco fields, country mansions, slave cabins, and mills turned by Rock Creek.

In January 1791 Washington directed that District limits be set to incorporate not only Georgetown and Alexandria but also two small settlements, Carrollsburg (now Southwest Washington) and Hamburg (east

of the John F. Kennedy Center). The site thus chosen, the president turned to the task of creating a city.



View of the City of Washington in 1792. "Reproduced in the style of that time from Historical data and sketches. By: Arthur B. Cutter, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army. Office of the District Engineer. Washington District, Washington 25, D.C. Jan '52." Goose or Tyber [Tiber] Creek depicted on the map ran from Seventeenth Street, N.W., along what is now Constitution Avenue. Photocopy 19 1/2 inches by 17 1/8 inches. National Archives, Center for Cartographic and Architectural Archives, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts.

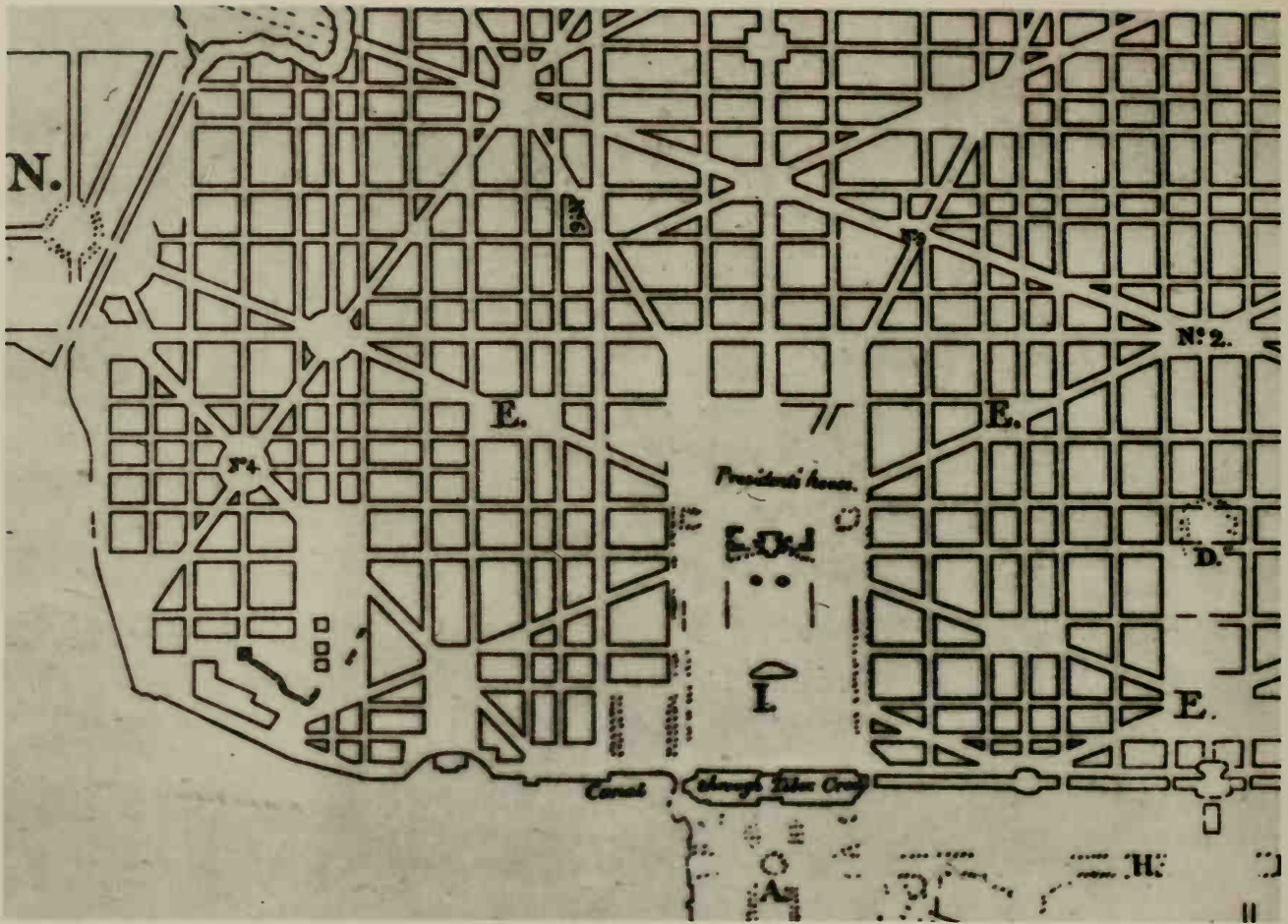


Early in 1791, acting under the Residence Act, President Washington made several appointments affecting the city's future: Thomas Johnson and Daniel Carroll of Maryland and David Stuart of Virginia were named federal district commissioners. Their duties included acquiring land for public buildings within the District and providing for the government's transfer to the Federal City by December 1800. The commissioners decided to call the entire District "The Territory of Columbia" with the Federal City within its boundaries named "The City of Washington." Thus Georgetown, Alexandria, and Washington each functioned as an incorporated city within the District.

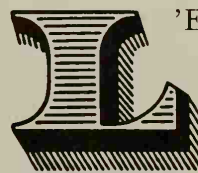
Also in 1791 the president appointed Andrew Ellicott, an experienced Maryland surveyor, to run the boundaries and prepare topographic information. As one of his assistants, Ellicott chose Benjamin Banneker, a free black who had taught himself mathematics, astronomy, and the use of surveying instruments.

In March 1791 the appointment that would most significantly shape the destiny of the Federal City was made: Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant became the designer of the nation's capital. L'Enfant, the versatile architect of New York City's Federal Hall, had known Washington since the Revolutionary War and, shortly after the adoption of the Constitution, had enthusiastically suggested ideas for the "Capital of this vast Empire." It was not surprising, therefore, that Washington and Jefferson chose him to prepare drawings of the rolling valleys along the Potomac, the Eastern Branch or

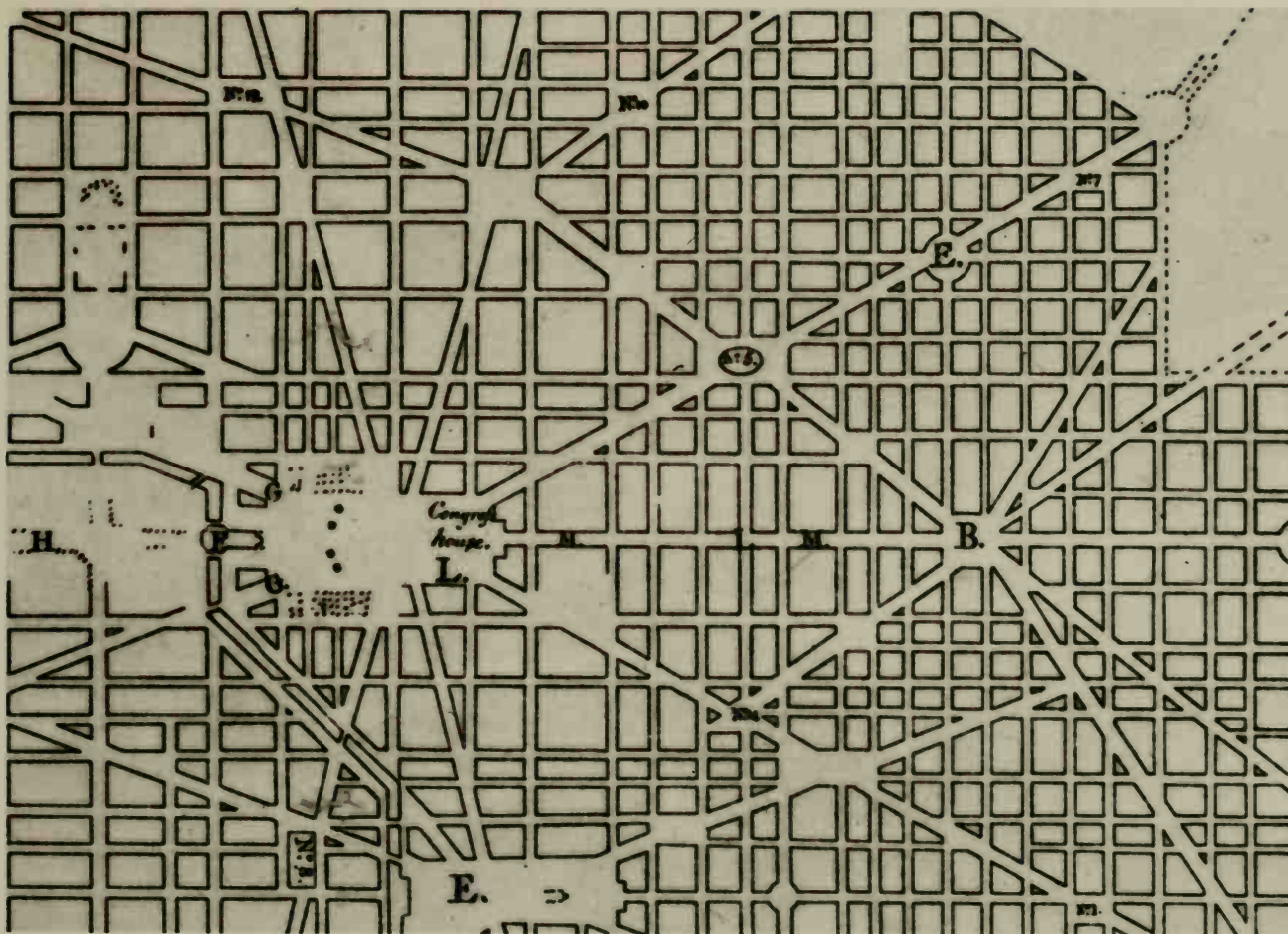
Anacostia River, and Tiber Creek. Although both men favored locating the Federal City close to Georgetown, L'Enfant convinced them it should embrace a larger part of the District. He recommended that public buildings be constructed in Tiber Creek valley and the Capitol on Jenkins Hill—"a pedestal waiting for a monument." Washington then personally met with owners of the farm tracts in these areas to obtain the land needed to create the Federal City.



Detail from L'Enfant's 1791 manuscript plan, showing what was then called the President's House, facing the future Pennsylvania Avenue.



'Enfant had pondered outlines for the city long before his appointment, and he was determined to create the national capital primarily as a seat of government rather than as a commercial center. The plan he produced for Washington and Jefferson in less than four months was a masterpiece of civic design. The two focal points in his proposal, the Capitol and the President's House, were joined by a formal mall; parks, monuments,



museums, and canals were united by broad, intersecting avenues. The draft included sites for public buildings as well as a national church, university, theaters, and markets. A series of radial boulevards, directly connecting public buildings and providing pleasant vistas from every angle, was superimposed over the basic street system. L'Enfant's city rivaled European capitals in beauty but remained distinct: it was the first national capital in history ever established by law and comprehensively designed.

Detail from L'Enfant's 1791 manuscript plan, showing the capitol and the eastern extension of the diagonal street pattern that was to be characteristic of the city.



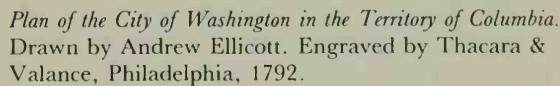
Money for constructing public buildings was to be raised by selling private lots in the Federal City. The commissioners, who had authority to oversee L'Enfant's work, were anxious to approve the plan and distribute engravings of it to prospective land buyers. L'Enfant, fearful the commissioners would alter his grand design, refused to submit it. Even before the plan was legally adopted, he avidly started constructing the public buildings, canals, streets—the whole concept he “saw in his mind.” When Commissioner Daniel Carroll began building a house in one of the imagined avenues, L'Enfant ordered it torn down. Despite admonitions from Washington and Jefferson, L'Enfant maintained he had “as much right to pull down a house, as to cut down a tree.” In February 1792 President Washington, convinced of L'Enfant's genius but exasperated with his obstinacy, dismissed the temperamental architect. Andrew Ellicott, who was sufficiently familiar with L'Enfant's design to reproduce it, prepared the map for the engraver. Washington and Jefferson introduced a few modifications, and the map, which did not mention L'Enfant, became known as the Ellicott plan.

Translating L'Enfant's dream of a splendid capital into reality was a difficult, challenging task. Four years after Ellicott's engraving appeared, construction of public and private buildings was barely underway, and when the government moved to the new capital in 1800, avenues were merely clearings cut through woods. The Capitol Building, designed by William Thornton and begun in 1793, was only partially completed,

while down the swampy hollows of Pennsylvania Avenue work proceeded slowly on the President's House. Abigail Adams, who had written to her sister from Philadelphia in February 1800 that “it is a very unpleasant thing to break up all the establishments, and remove to a place so little at present,” found the Executive Mansion habitable in November, but

“there is not a single apartment finished. . . . We have not the least fence, yard, or other convenience, without, and the great unfinished audience-room [the East Room] I make a drying-room of, to hang up the clothes in. The principal stairs are not up, and will not be this winter. Six chambers are made comfortable. . . . If the twelve years, in which this place has been considered as the future seat of government, had been improved, as they would have been if in New England, very many of the present inconveniences would have been removed. It is a beautiful spot, capable of every improvement, and, the more I am delighted with it.”

East of the Executive Mansion, The Department of the Treasury occupied a thirty-room wooden structure. At first the seven Department of State employees worked in the Treasury Building, but they soon moved into one of the “Seven Buildings,” an isolated group of structures at Nineteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.



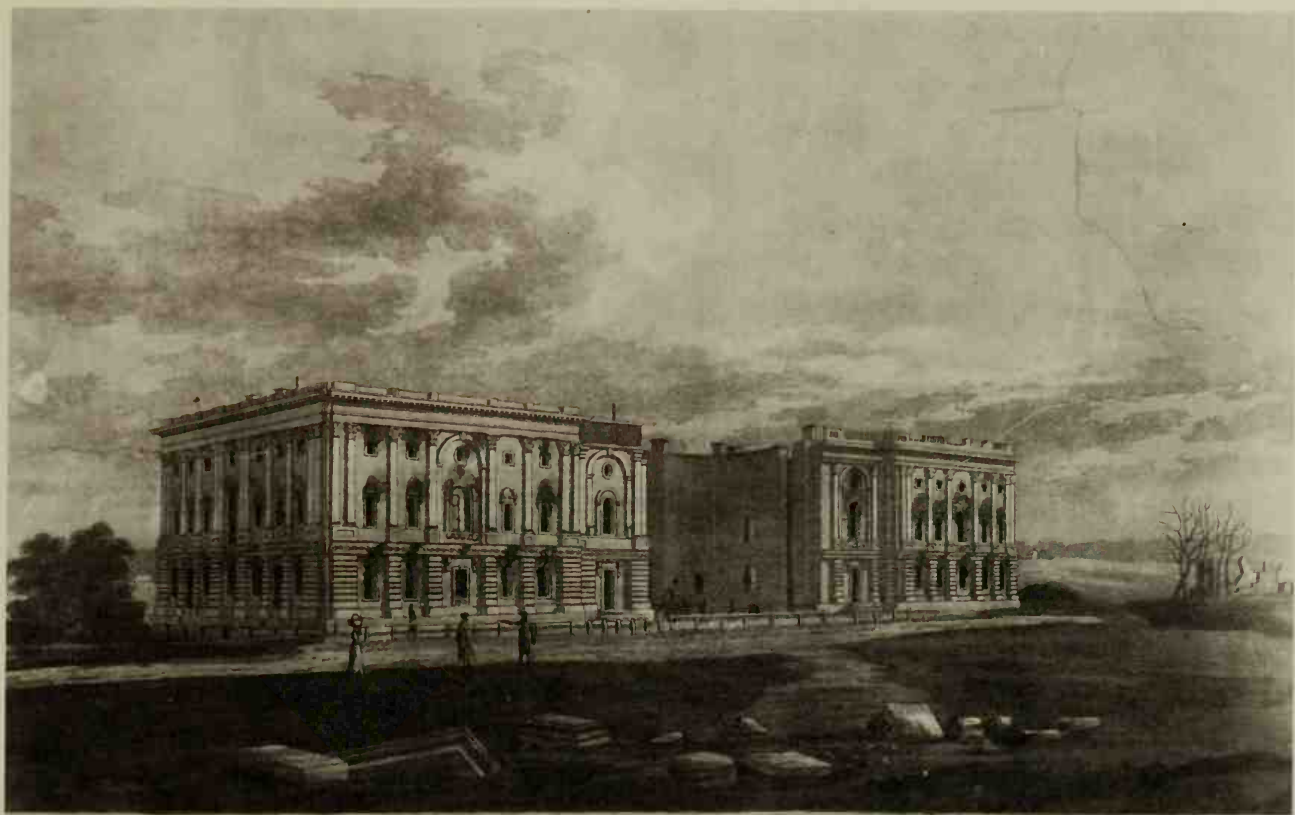


hen the United States entered the War of 1812, the national capital was a community of scattered houses and few government buildings. Only an inexperienced, ill-equipped militia stood ready to defend the eighty-two hundred inhabitants of Washington City. On the night of August 24, 1814, British troops, facing little opposition, attacked the city and set fire to the Capitol, the President's House, and the Treasury, State, and Navy buildings, the Potomac Bridge, and private houses on Capitol Hill. President Madison, who had ridden out to oversee the city's defenses, sent word to his wife Dolley to leave Washington. She hastily packed Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington with Madison's papers and fled through Georgetown to Virginia. State documents, including the Declaration of Independence and the Consitution, had been evacuated a day earlier. While Washington burned, these records were safely hidden in Leesburg, Virginia, thirty-five miles from the capital.

Humiliated and discouraged, government officials returned to the ruins of Washington a few days after the British withdrawal. Almost immediately other cities proposed relocating the capital by offering Congress safe and comfortable accommodations. But the war had awakened in Americans an awareness that Washington was truly a national symbol. Patriotic pride would not let them submit to defeat, and citizens determinedly set out to build L'Enfant's Federal City.

Upon their return to the charred and smouldering town, the Madisons established

residence first on Eighteenth Street at the Octagon House and then in the corner home of the "Seven Buildings." In 1815 architect James Hoban, original designer of the Executive Mansion, began reconstructing the gutted building. The fire-blackened sandstone exterior was painted white, and the President's House became popularly known as the White House. President and Mrs. Monroe were able to occupy the restored mansion in 1817.



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A VIEW OF THE CAPITOL OF THE UNITED STATES

after the Conflagration of the 24th August 1814

View of the Capitol of the United States after the Conflagration of the 24th August 1814. Color engraving by William Strickland after George Munger. Library of Congress.



A VIEW of the PRESIDENTS HOUSE in the CITY of WASHINGTON

after the Conflagration of the 24th August 1814.

*A View of the Presidents House in the City of Washington after the
Conflagration of the 24th August 1814. Color engraving by
William Strickland after George Munger. Library of
Congress.*



The President's House, overlooking Pennsylvania Avenue.
Lithograph by Deroy after drawing by August Kollner.
Printed by Cattier. Published by Goupil, Vibert & Co.,
New York, 1848. Library of Congress.



ongress took up quarters in Blodgett's Hotel and then in the Brick Capitol, hastily erected on the present site of the Supreme Court Building by several prominent citizens attempting to accommodate the homeless legislature. Benjamin Latrobe, the architect who had supervised the Capitol's construction in 1803, was recalled to remodel the devastated interior. William Thornton had originally designed a low-domed building, but only two wings joined by a covered walkway had been erected when the British burned the city. Latrobe enlarged the Senate chamber of Thornton's building and redesigned the House chamber into a semicircular shape. His successor Charles Bulfinch completed the work, enabling senators and representatives to assemble in the restored Capitol in 1819. The first dome was finally finished in 1827 under the direction of Bulfinch, who also improved the grounds and added a fence and gatehouses. By the end of the decade only the Capitol, dominating every other city structure, and the White House had assumed the grandeur planned for the government's buildings.

Successors of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson lost the vision of a consistently designed capital, and in the nineteenth century L'Enfant's plan was virtually forgotten. Sporadic attempts to implement the design often created more problems than improvements. Such was the case with the Washington City Canal, included in the plan to benefit city commerce. Congress granted a charter for the canal in 1802, but construction met endless delays. A section running from Tiber Creek inlet (now Seventeenth Street

and Constitution Avenue, N.W.) along the Mall's northern edge, then turning southward to the Eastern Branch, was finally opened in 1815. The city purchased the canal in 1831 and connected it to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal at Georgetown. The system was unsuitable for heavily laden barges, and, instead of promoting commercial prosperity, it gradually deteriorated into an open sewer filled with trash, mosquitoes, and dead animals. Ellicott's 1792 map showed the canal dividing into two sections. One was constructed along South Capitol Street. The other along Delaware Avenue was never built, although it continued to appear for some time on city maps. In the late 1850s Albert Boschke prepared an accurate drawing of the capital, showing the actual canal route. At this late date, Delaware Avenue remained undrained, desolate swampland.

In an 1834 romanticized view of Washington only the Capitol and the White House, prominent among other buildings, identified the city as the national capital. Despite the passing of four decades, the Federal City was little more than a quiet southern village sprawling over an enormous site, dotted with unrelated public buildings.



CITY OF WASHINGTON

From beyond the Navy yard

Published by Lewis P. Clover & Co. New York

City of Washington From beyond the Navy yard. Color engraving by W. J. Bennett from a painting by George Cooke. Published in 1834 by Lewis P. Clover, New York. 30 3/8 inches by 22 inches. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, General Records of the Department of State (59-DA-1).



As the decades passed public building construction seldom followed L'Enfant's plan, but few serious mistakes were made that would prevent future generations from implementing the design. The Treasury Building, designed by architect Robert Mills, is one exception. From its inception the building was the center of controversy. The original structure east of the White House burned in 1833, but three years of indecision passed before Congress authorized a fireproof structure to replace it. Legislators favored locating the new one on the old site; President Andrew Jackson preferred a building on Lafayette Square for all executive departments. According to a Washington legend, Jackson, impatient over delays in selecting the site, strode to the field next to the White House and said: "Here, right here, is where I want the cornerstone laid." In reality he acquiesced in the congressional decision of July 4, 1836, designating the new site at Fifteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.

As the Treasury Building wings rose one by one, Congress realized it had made an irreparable error. Completed in 1869, the large structure in the center of Pennsylvania Avenue today blocks L'Enfant's sweeping concourse uniting the White House and the Capitol.

L'Enfant had been explicit in his design of the Mall. It was to be a "grand avenue" dominating the capital's central composition. The waters of Tiber Creek would cascade from the Capitol into the Washington Canal paralleling the mile long driveway bordered by gardens and diplomatic residences. But in reality the Mall bore little resemblance to an

elegant park. Pigs roamed the open field, street lamps were scarce, and refuse stagnated the canal. A bequest from the English scientist James Smithson for the establishment of a scientific and cultural center gave residents hope for an improvement in the city's appearance, for Congress decided in 1846 to locate the Smithsonian Building on the Mall. By the close of the decade the grounds surrounding the Smithsonian Institution were graded, planted with trees, and enclosed with a fence to keep out wild geese and pigs. Although many termed the red turreted building designed by James Renwick "romantic," it stood close to the center of the Mall and eliminated L'Enfant's concept of a stately carriage driveway.



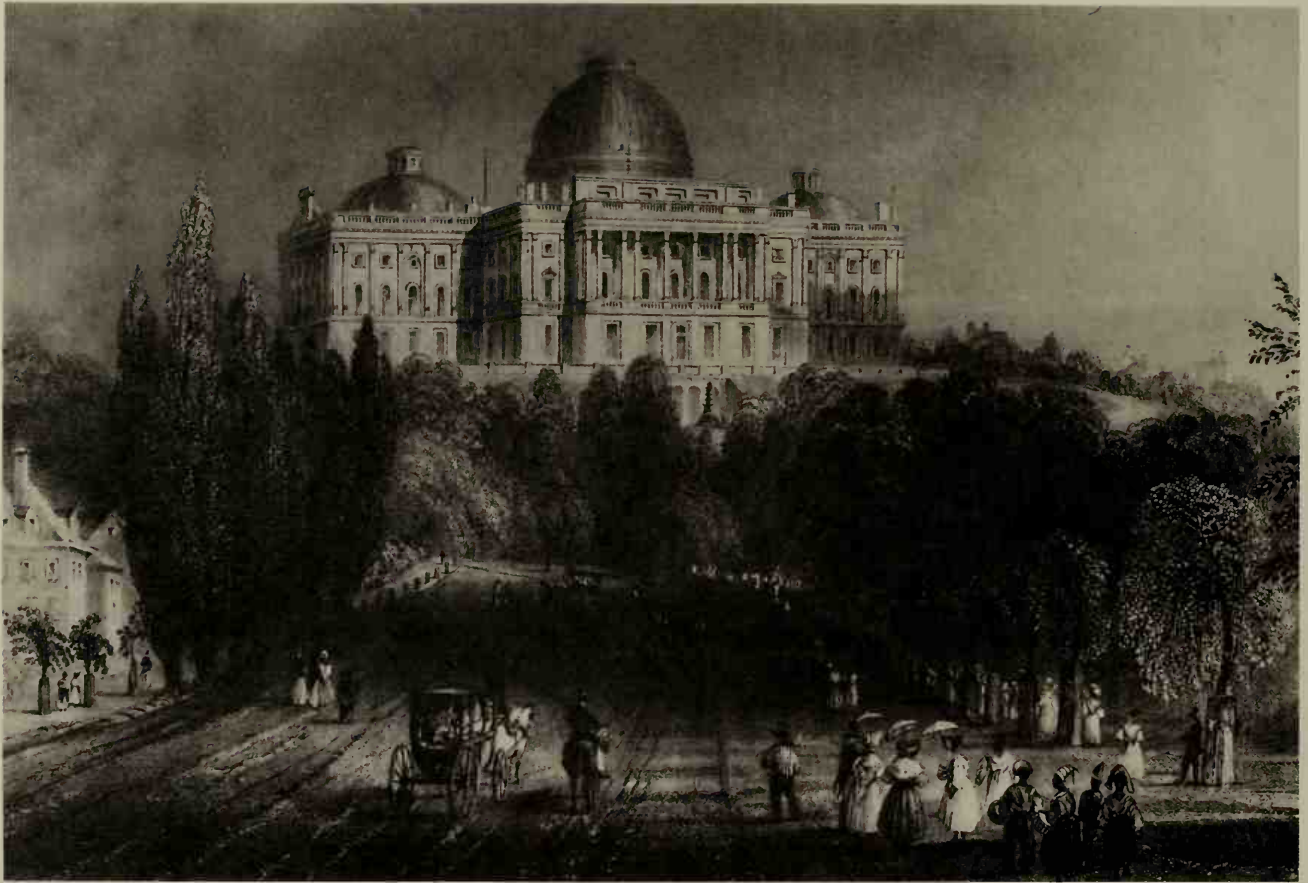
Map of the City of Washington in the District of Columbia.
Engraved by William J. Stone, Washington, about 1839.
Stone depicted the Washington Canal running along Delaware Avenue, but this section was never actually constructed. 32 1/4 inches by 25 1/4 inches. National Archives, Center for Cartographic and Architectural Archives, Records of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, Number 3036.



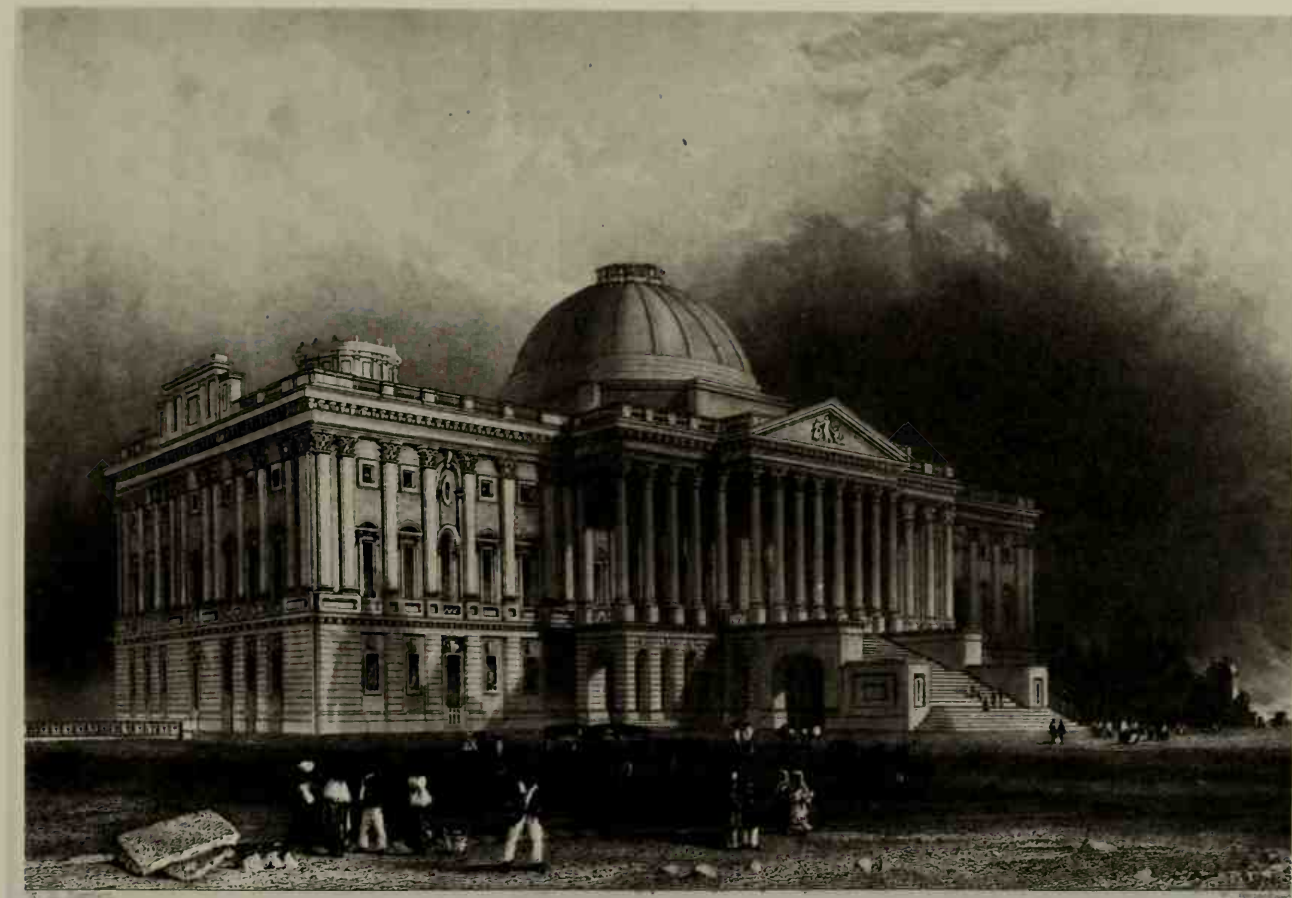
VIEW OF WASHINGTON.

Published and sold by G. S. Clinton & Co. Galleries in N.Y.

An 1852 print of the east front of the Capitol. The view is looking west down Pennsylvania Avenue. (Note that the Mills design for the Washington Monument was used in this illustration, even though it was never completed.)
National Archives Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-HW-116).



View of the west front of the Capitol as completed by Charles Bulfinch. Engraving by C. J. Bentley from the original wash drawing in sepia and gouache by William Henry Bartlett. Published for the proprietors by George Virtue, London, 1837. Columbia Historical Society.



PRINCIPAL FRONT OF THE CAPITOL WASHINGTON.

Drawing of the east front of the Capitol as completed by Charles Bulfinch. The Senate side is on the right (north), the House of Representatives side on the left. National Archives Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-HW-81).

The rapidly maturing nation comprised thirty-one states in 1850, and the increasing number of senators and representatives found the Capitol chambers cramped and inadequate. Congress authorized appropriations for enlarging the building, and extensive changes under the direction of Capitol Architect Thomas U. Walter began the following year. New Senate and House wings were constructed, reducing the original chambers to links between the additions and the central rotunda. The House occupied its chamber in 1857, and the Senate held its first session in the new quarters in 1859, just as the nation moved to the brink of civil war. Dwarfed by the larger wings, the old dome was slowly replaced, beginning in 1855, by a loftier one weighing nearly nine million pounds. Despite wartime handicaps and pressure to postpone construction, President Abraham Lincoln insisted the work continue. "If people see the Capitol going on," he said, "it is a sign that we intend the Union shall go on." The great bronze statue of "Freedom" placed atop the completed dome on December 2, 1863, symbolizes the realization of Lincoln's dream.



Statue of *Freedom* by Thomas Crawford.
The statue was hoisted into place on the
Capitol dome amid a salute of 35 guns
on December 2, 1863.



The Capitol and the Washington Canal, 1860. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-G-22C-2).



Long Bridge crossing the Potomac River near Fourteenth Street. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Mathew Brady Collection (111-B-4813).



View of Independence Avenue and the original Smithsonian Building designed by James Renwick, 1863. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Mathew Brady Collection (111-B-4964).

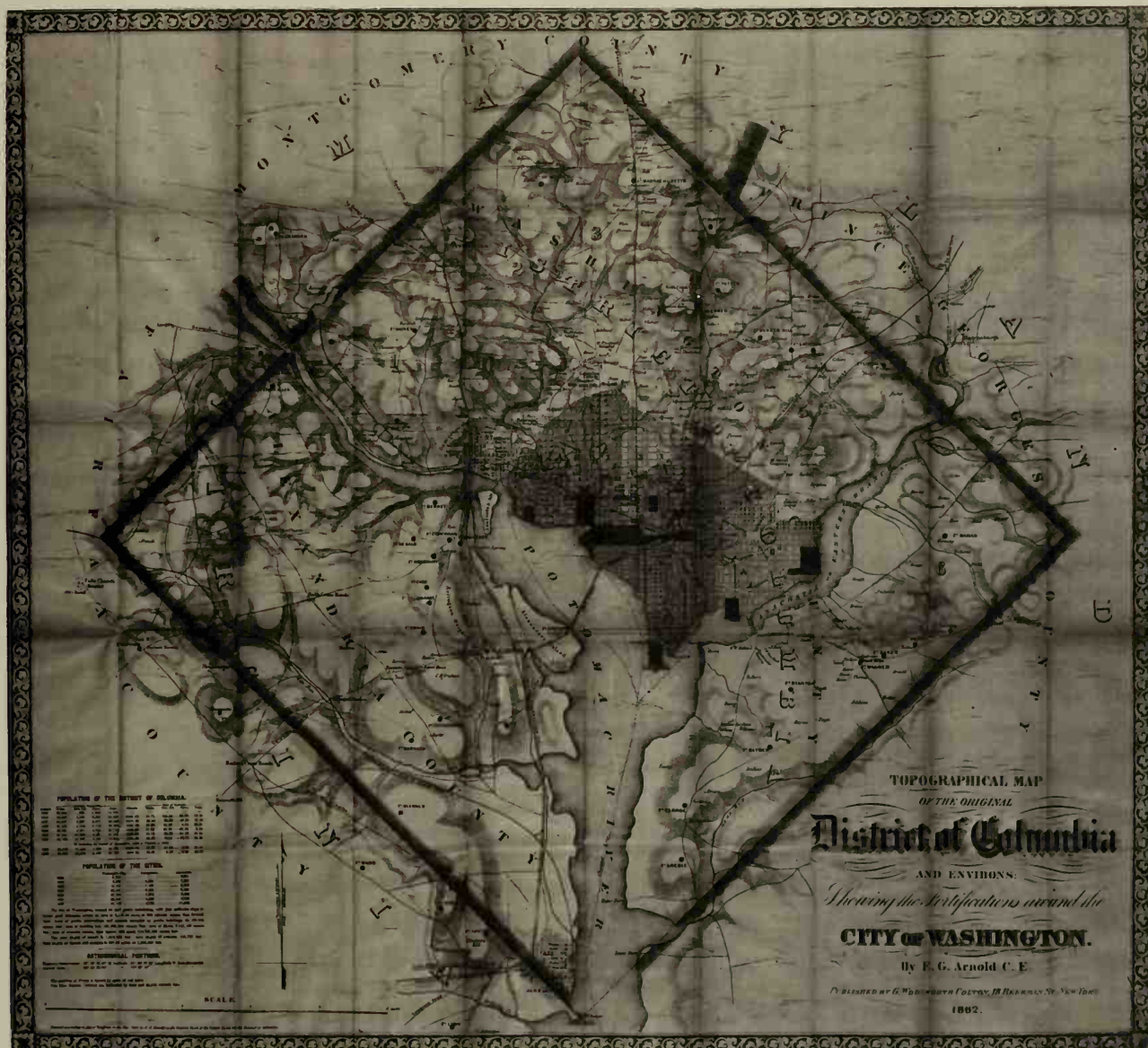


Civil War view of the White House and the Treasury Building showing the Washington Canal along the northern edge of the Mall. Union cattle pens and slaughterhouses occupied the Mall along Fourteenth Street. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Mathew Brady Collection (111-B-5147).



s civil war gripped North and South, visionary plans gave way to the basic needs for survival. Throughout the early months of war, Washingtonians had optimistically maintained that the conflict would end with the first battle. Complacency turned to anguish after the July 1861 Confederate victory at Bull Run, only thirty miles from the capital. By October the following year, more than two hundred thousand Union troops defended the city, and the District became an armed camp ringed by forty-eight forts and batteries. The threat of attack subsided as soldiers and fugitive slaves swelled the population, but the need to quarter troops in the Capitol, Treasury Building, and Patent Office, as well as in tents on the public squares, resulted in temporary chaos. To feed its troops, the army opened a bakery in the Capitol basement and slaughtered cattle on the Mall only a few blocks from the White House. Schoolhouses, churches, and homes became hospitals where housewives treated the increasing number of soldiers suffering from wounds and typhoid fever. Cavalry, mule trains, and herds of cattle thudded through the city, destroying streets and sidewalks. The already overburdened sanitation system collapsed as animal carcasses from government corrals and garbage heaps from military hospitals contaminated the streets. Abandoned homes of Confederate sympathizers who had fled to the South loomed as mute reminders of the Union's dissolution. Washington officials and residents strove to maintain some semblance of normal life through parties, plays, and elaborate banquets. But beneath the gay facade, anxiety and death were everywhere.

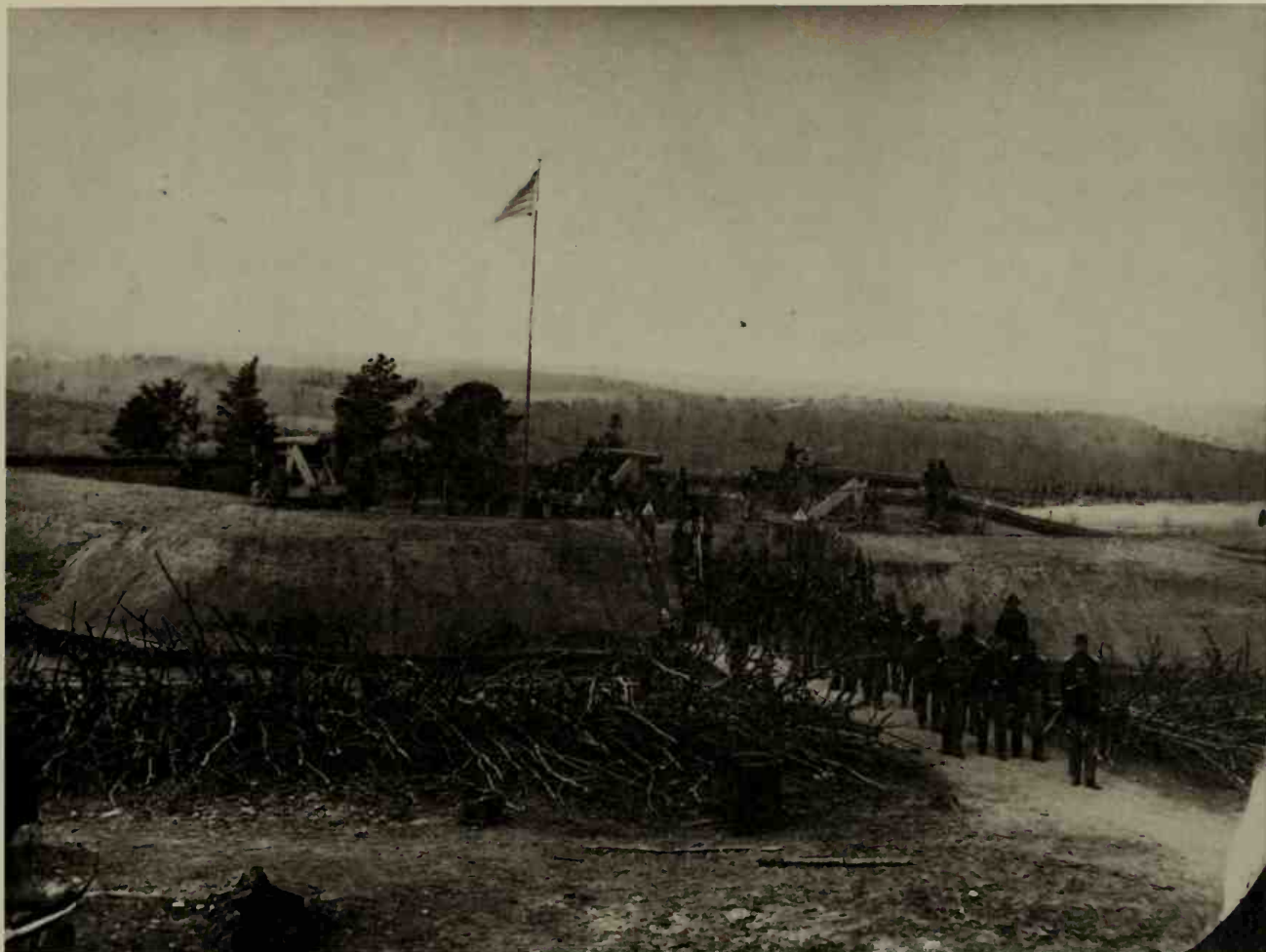
Arlington House, across the Potomac from Washington, was the home of Robert E. Lee and his wife, Mary Ann Randolph Custis, until the Civil War. The house had been built in 1802 by Mrs. Lee's father, George Washington Parke Custis, Martha Washington's grandson. Lee and his wife inherited the house in 1831 and lived there until April 20, 1861, when Lee sadly declined the command of the entire Union army and with his wife and children left for Richmond. Lee never saw the house again. It was one of the first "enemy" sites occupied by Union forces. The house, today known as the Custis-Lee Mansion, is surrounded by Arlington National Cemetery.



An 1862 map of Washington by E.G. Arnold. The black dots indicate the location of Civil War fortifications that surrounded the city. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Commission of Fine Arts. (66-HW-131).



Union troops at the Custis-Lee Mansion which now overlooks Arlington National Cemetery. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs (165-C-518).



Fort Stevens, in Northwest Washington. One of the many Civil War forts that defended Washington. Although threatened, the city was never actually attacked. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Commission of Fine Arts. (66-HW-133).



he Old Brick Capitol was erected as temporary quarters for Congress in 1815. The building passed into obscurity after the main Capitol was rebuilt, but civil war brought it national notoriety. In the first months of conflict the provost marshal commandeered the Brick Capitol for a military prison, and subsequently prisoners of war, deserters, spies, Confederate officers, and scores of citizens suspected of disloyalty were jailed behind its walls. One of the most closely guarded of all Union prisons, it epitomized the fear that Washington's greatest danger came from internal subversion by Confederate sympathizers.



The Old Capitol Prison. On this site the Supreme Court Building now stands. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Mathew Brady Collection (111-B-2292).

Baggage and supply trains, rumbling across the Long Bridge to the Virginia campaigns, returned to Washington with the casualties of war. To prevent Confederate forces within twenty-five miles of the city's limits from entering the capital, Union troops later removed the bridge floor. Thereafter, a railroad bridge constructed parallel to the Long Bridge was the government's prime communication and supply line with its field armies.

Fully aware that Washington's security depended on the Union's preservation, residents apprehensively awaited the outcome of the war. After battles at nearby Fredericksburg, Bull Run, and Antietam the federal army surveyed rebel troop movements from the land and air. With equipment stationed on the Capitol grounds, T.S.C. Lowe, chief of the Army Aeronautic Corps, made balloon observations of Confederate troop encampments across the Potomac. In July 1864 Lieutenant General Jubal Early's raiders did cross the river and attacked Fort Stevens, a few miles north of the White House. President Lincoln, who rode out to witness the battle dressed in his familiar stovepipe hat, was spotted and fired upon by Confederate sharpshooters. The timely arrival of two Union army corps dispatched from Petersburg by General U.S. Grant forced Early to abandon the attack and saved Washington from capture.



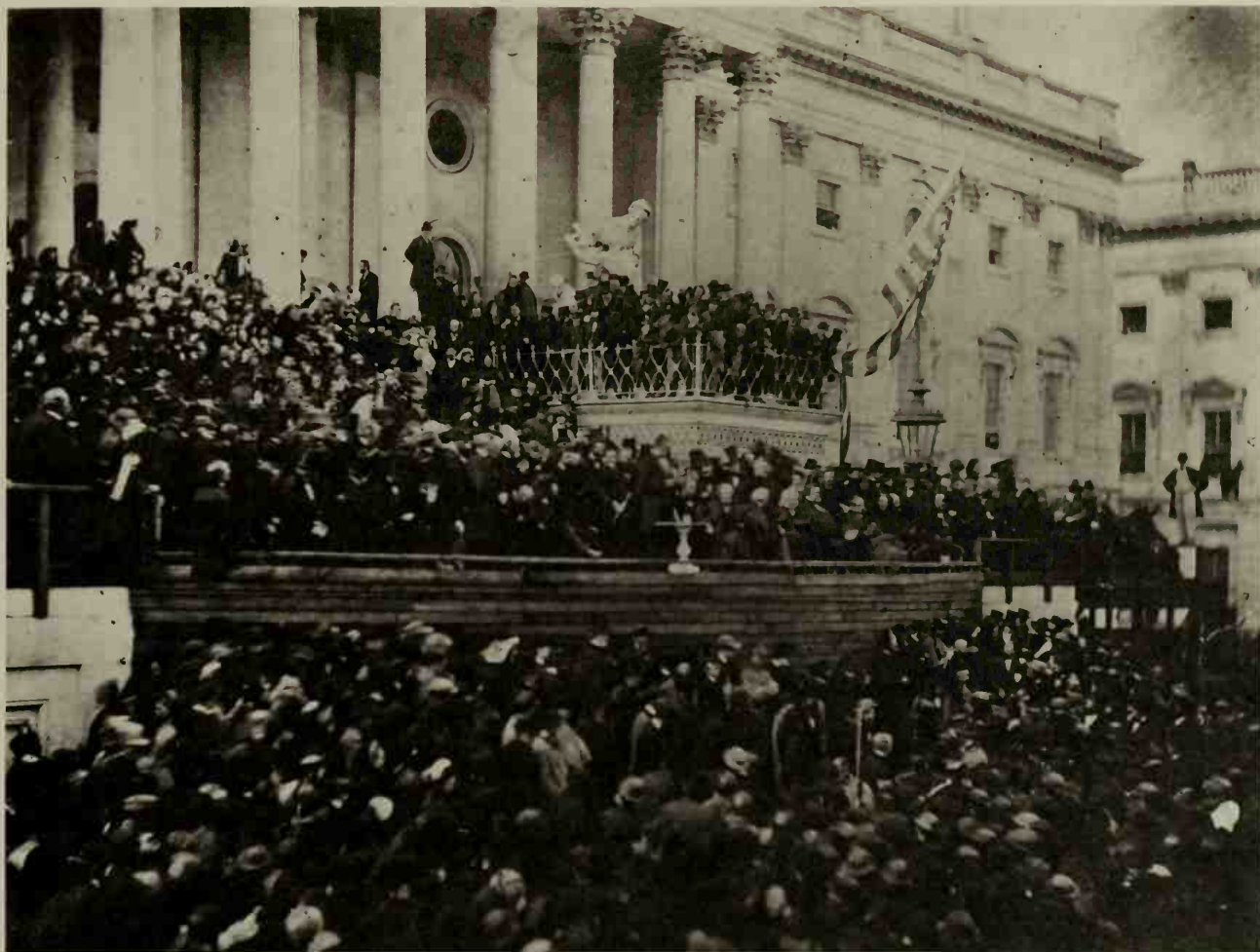
Balloon equipment used by aeronaut T. S. C. Lowe to survey Confederate troops across the Potomac, 1863. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Department of Agriculture Collection (16-AD-2).



t Abraham Lincoln's second inauguration on March 4, 1865, the crowd heard the troubled president plead for peace. John Wilkes Booth, the man who would assassinate Lincoln several weeks later, stood on the balcony behind him.

Lincoln learned of Robert E. Lee's surrender on April 9. Washington joyously responded to the news, but celebrations were abruptly stilled five days later by the president's tragic assassination. Shot while attending a performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theater, Lincoln was carried to the boardinghouse across the street. As he lay dying, fear and uncertainty once again crept over the city. Booth fled across the Anacostia Bridge to Maryland and then to Virginia, only to be killed himself twelve days later by Union troops.

A more festive mood enveloped Washington on May 23, 1865, when General George G. Meade led victorious Union troops down Pennsylvania Avenue. Amid the mud and dust of city streets, an impressive procession passed before the presidential reviewing stand. As troops trekked homeward in succeeding months, forts were dismantled and hospitals were restored to private use. The pace of activities slowed, but the city had been forever altered. Washington was assuming a new urban character.



Abraham Lincoln's inauguration, March 4, 1865. Lincoln is standing behind the white table. His assassin John Wilkes Booth is believed to be standing behind the railing beneath the large statue. To Lincoln's left are the justices of the Supreme Court; to his right are Vice President Andrew Johnson (covering his face) and the other cabinet members. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, National Archives Gift Collection (200S-M-95)



Ford's Theater, Tenth Street, N.W., late nineteenth century. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-G-22B-1).

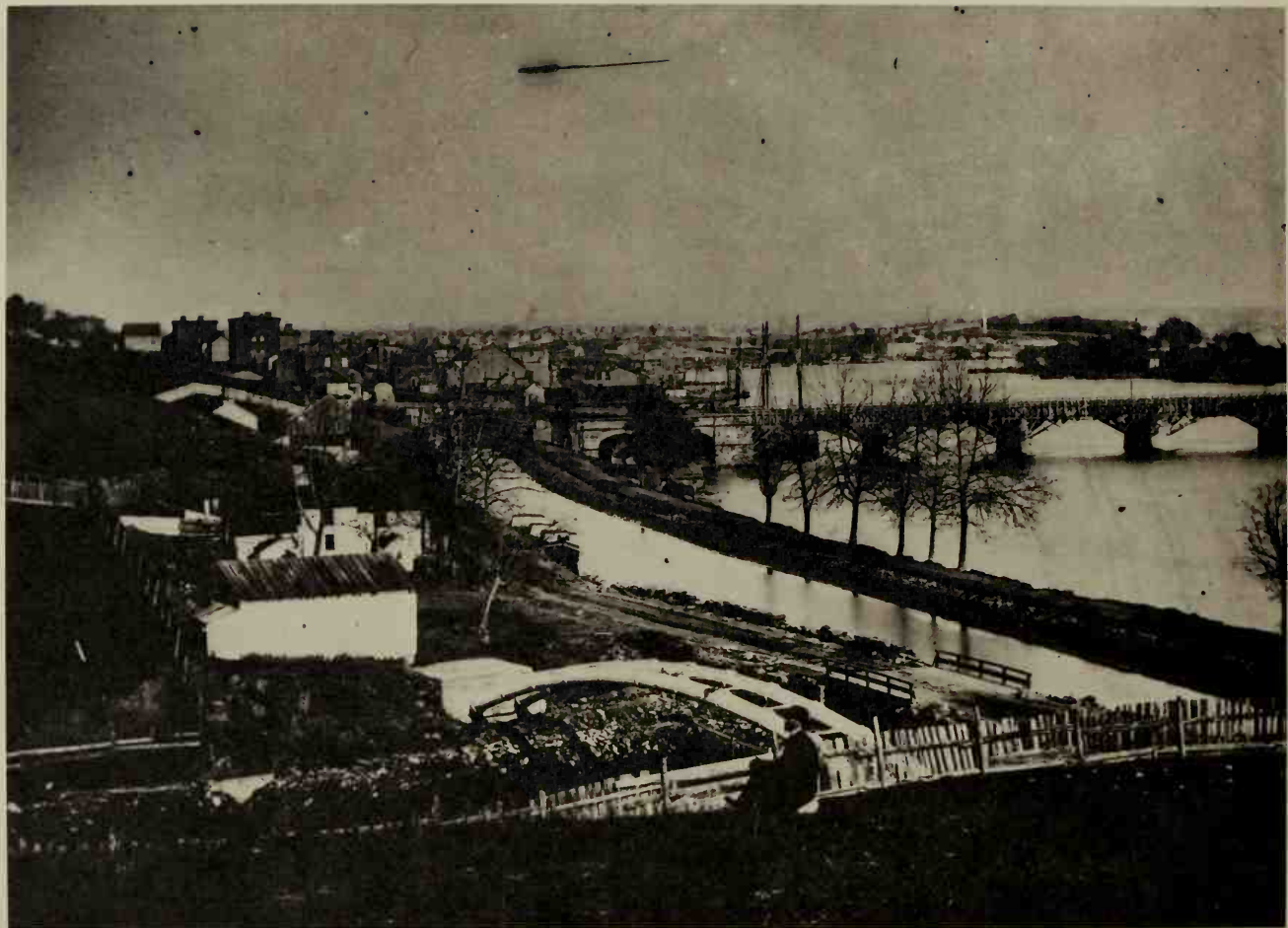


The "Grand Review" of Union troops on Pennsylvania Avenue, May 1865. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Office of War Information (208)-PR-10E-11).





At left, Carver Hospital, Washington, 1864. It was built as a convalescent institution on Meridian Hill on Sixteenth Street, N.W. (111-B-173). Above, bridge over the Eastern Branch (Anacostia Bridge) at Eleventh Street, S.E., 1865. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division, Mathew Brady Collection (111-B-343).



In contrast to Washington, the port of Georgetown had become a bustling trading center, exporting goods to foreign and domestic markets. The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, constructed through Georgetown in 1828, connected the headwaters of the Ohio with the Potomac and carried commercial traffic to that port. But the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, following

much the same route, began service in the District in 1835 and rapidly became the city's primary commercial artery. Although donkey-pulled barges floated cargo down the canal for almost another century, it was never a financial success. Severely damaged by floods, it ceased operation in 1924 and was sold to the government fourteen years later. Today the canal is a valuable recreation area in the National Capital Park system.



At left, view of Georgetown, the C&O Canal and the Aqueduct Bridge, photographed in 1862. The unfinished Capitol dome (center horizon) and the shaft of the Washington Monument (right horizon) appear on the city skyline. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Mathew Brady Collection. (111-B-5422). Above, Georgetown wharves from Masons Island. Georgetown College can be seen on the left in this 1862 photograph. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Commission of Fine Arts. (66-HW-146).



West end of Georgetown in 1862. The Georgetown College building is at right. Traffic on the C&O Canal can be seen just above the Potomac shore on the Washington side. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Commission of Fine Arts. (66-HW-144).



he Aqueduct Bridge, a double-decker wooden structure, was opened in 1843 by an enterprising group of Alexandria businessmen who wished to transport C&O Canal barges across the Potomac. A water-filled trough carried the barges on the lower level, while the upper



level conveyed pedestrian traffic, wagons, and carriages. The unique commercial venture failed because the timbers soon rotted and leaked, forcing abandonment of the Aqueduct Bridge as a link in the canal system. The Francis Scott Key Bridge, completed in 1923, now stands near the old bridge site.

This view of Georgetown taken just east of the photograph at left, shows Georgetown College on the left. Horses can be seen towing barges on the C&O Canal. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Commission of Fine Arts. (66-HW-145).



'Enfant's original Mall design included a memorial to George Washington at the intersection of the White House and Capitol axes (lines drawn west from the Capitol and south from the White House). When, by 1833, Congress had made no move to erect the monument, private citizens organized the

Washington National Monument Society and conducted a drive for contributions. Within three years the society had obtained \$28,000, enabling it to solicit designs in a contest won by Robert Mills, who also designed the Treasury Building. He proposed a six-hundred-foot obelisk surrounded by a circular Greek temple at the base. A toga-clad Washington drove a chariot drawn by

Memory of Washington.

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES.

WHEN your beloved WASHINGTON, THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY, died! You saw with increased sensibility the universe in tears! AMERICANS! How did your bosoms dilate and glow, when, at the first meeting of your political fathers, following the melancholly event, you saw the call for a MONUMENT worthy of the SUBLIME VIRTUES you hoped to perpetuate, universally applauded!

How then FELLOW COUNTRYMEN, have ye permitted two whole years to pass since the noble and natural resolution was every where individually formed; and the traveller still to ask in vain, *Where is THE NATIONAL MONUMENT, sacred to Public and Private Virtue; to the manes of the illustrious WASHINGTON?*

COLUMBIANS! You owe to the world, as well as to yourselves, an apology, or an explanation, for the mysterious delay of your acknowledged duty: Since nothing can be more true, than that a mere difference of opinion, respecting the form of the Monument, or the mode of its elevation, is the sole cause. To prove this, let us agree at once to obviate all difficulty, by uniting in a simple plan to accord with the annexed, *now in operation*—

Terms of Subscription,

To a MONUMENT sacred to Public and Private Virtue, dedicated to GEORGE WASHINGTON, to be erected in the City bearing his name, by the voluntary contribution of citizens of the United States only.—The form, and inscriptions, to be under the intire direction of three Trustees.

I. THESE articles of subscription for a Monument to WASHINGTON may be opened in any district or part of the United States, provided that none but citizens be allowed to subscribe, and that no individual be allowed to contribute in his own name more than one *Eagle*, (or *Ten Dollars*) to this subscription fund.

II. THE name of each subscriber shall be written in a book, and transmitted with the subscription monies to either Branch of the Bank of the United States.

III. To render the whole design as simple as may be, three trusty and well beloved friends, namely, BUSHROO WASHINGTON, and JOHN MARSHALL, Judges in the Supreme Court of the United States, and BENJAMIN STODDERT, late Secretary of the Navy of the United States, or any two of them, are hereby empowered and requested to carry the whole design into effect, in such manner as in their wisdom may be deemed most honorable to the memory of WASHINGTON.

IV. SHOULD the sum hereby collected be more than sufficient for a Monument or Mausoleum, whatever the object of our respect may be called, the Trustees are hereby requested to appropriate the surplus to increase the fund which WASHINGTON began when in his last will and testament he virtually laid the corner stone of a NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

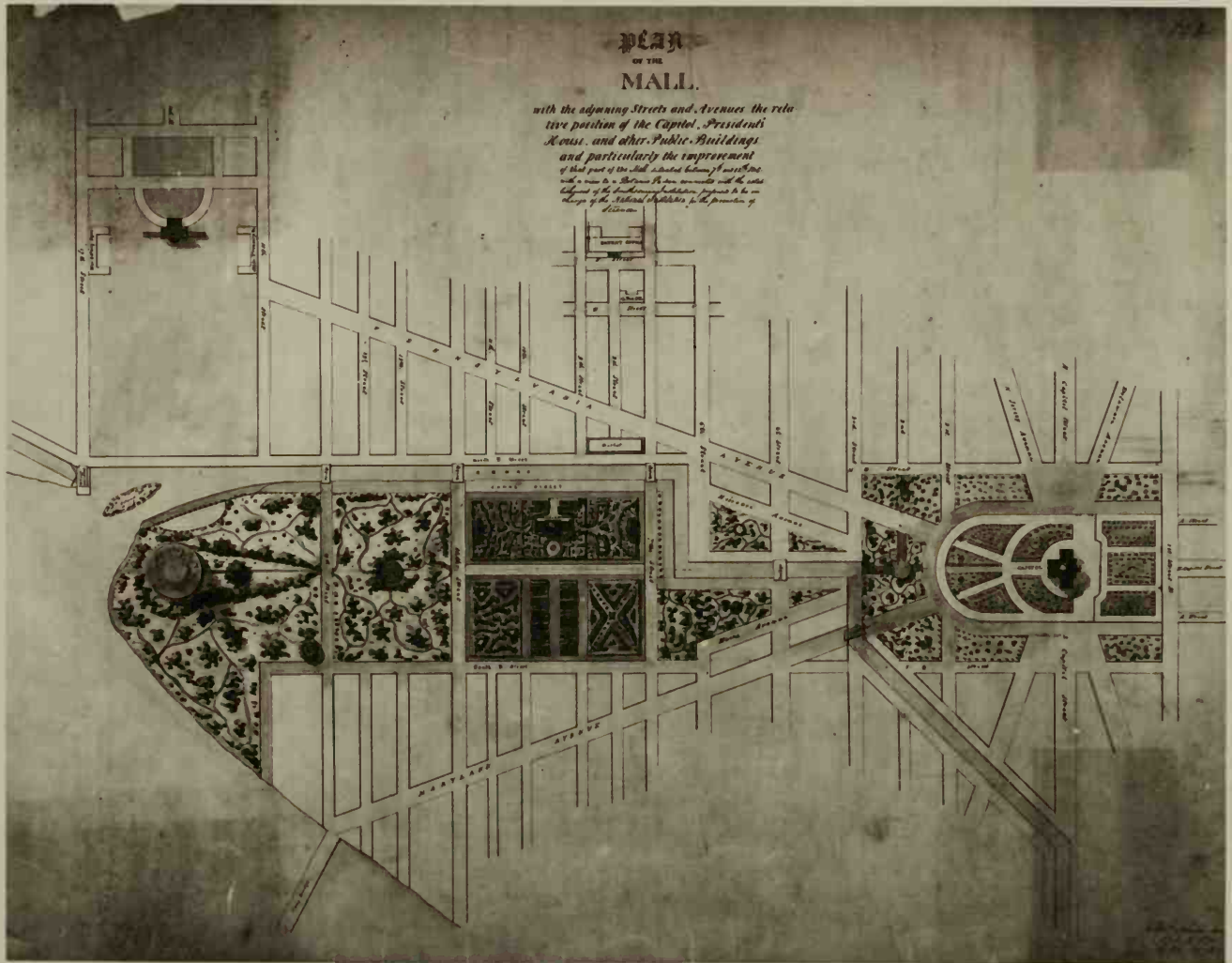
V. THE Trustees are hereby empowered and requested to draw the subscription monies from the Bank, in which they are deposited at discretion, and also to deposit the original subscription book, either with the remains of WASHINGTON, or in the Library of the National University, founded by WASHINGTON. They are also requested to publish whenever they may think fit, statements of their progress in the important work, hereby assigned to their care.

Broadside soliciting funds for a memorial to George Washington. Issued in 1801 by Samuel Blodgett. 5 inches by 7 inches. National Archives, Natural Resources Branch, Records of the Washington National Monument Society, Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. At right *Plan of the Mall . . . connected with the establishment of the Smithsonian Institution, proposed to be in charge of the National Institution for the promotion of Science*. James Smithson willed his fortune to the United States in 1826. Anticipating the location of the Smithsonian Building on the Mall, architect Robert Mills drew a plan for the adjacent area in 1841. Color rendering 25 1/4 inches by 19 3/8 inches. National Archives, Center for Cartographic and Architectural Records, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers (Cons-90-1).

Arabian horses above the central portico.

Another ten years passed before the society had sufficient funds to begin construction. The cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1848, in a ceremony witnessed by George Washington Parke Custis, Martha Washington's grandson, and two of the president's contemporaries, Dolley Madison and Mrs. Alexander Hamilton. Because of the

original location's unstable ground, the monument was shifted to a southeastern point. This deviation from the L'Enfant plan put the monument off center in relation to later memorials. Depleted funds forced the society to halt construction in 1854, and the 156-foot stunted shaft marred the city skyline for the next two decades.



By the 1870s, growing concern over completion of the monument prompted professional and amateur designers to suggest various solutions to the society. Some proposed tearing down the shaft and beginning anew; others submitted variations of the original design. Fortunately, Congress during the

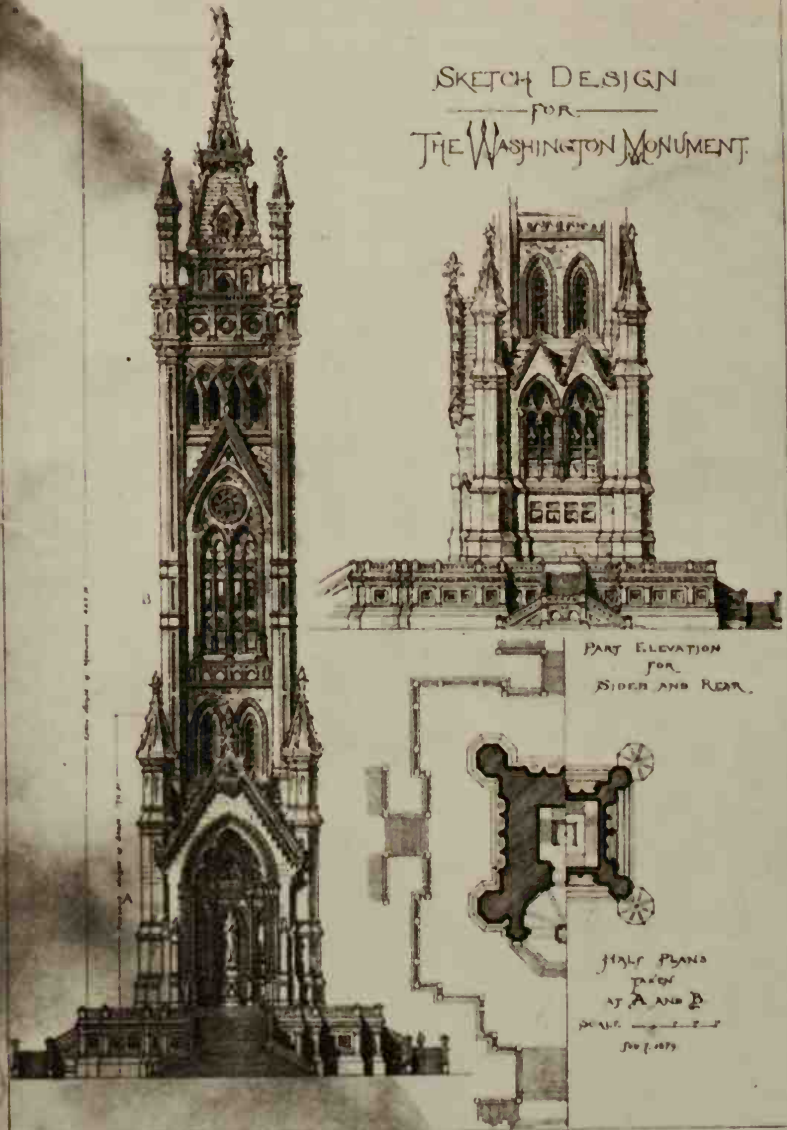
1876 national centennial agreed to finance the project; but by now most of Mills's concept had been abandoned, and only the obelisk remained. The capstone, the largest piece of aluminum then cast, was placed atop the 555-foot obelisk in a ceremony held December 6, 1884. With installation of a steam elevator four years later, the monument became a favorite tourist attraction.





Design for a sixteen-foot Washington National Sphinx (opposite page) by J. Goldsboro Bruff, March 19, 1873. Tinted drawing 15 1/8 inches by 12 3/8 inches. National Archives, Legislative and Natural Resources Branch, Records of the Washington National Monument Society, Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. At left, Robert Mills' 1863 design for the Washington Monument. Only the obelisk remained in the final version, which was not completed until 1884.

SKETCH DESIGN
FOR
THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT



THE MEMORY —OF— GEORGE WASHINGTON.


EVERY true lover of his country will contribute something
this day, in aid of the

Great National Monument —TO— WASHINGTON!

Have ready your donation, however small. The Contribution Box and the Ballot Box are this day side by side at every Poll in the United States.

The County in this State making the largest contribution in proportion to the number of votes cast, will be presented with an elegant three-quarter size MARBLE STATUE OF WASHINGTON, valued at \$500.

CALIFORNIA, Nov. 6, 1860.

 Please put up this notice in the immediate vicinity of the Polls on election day, so that every voter can be ready with his contribution.

A California broadside in 1860 requesting donations for the completion of the Washington Monument. At left, design for completing the Washington National Monument shaft by M.P. Hapgood. Printed in the American Architect and Building News, March 15, 1879, by Heliotype Printing Company, Boston. 8 3/8 inches by 13 inches. National Archives, Legislative and Natural Resources Branch, Records of the Washington National Monument Society, Office of Public Buildings and Grounds.



An 1872 drawing of Washington as seen from Arlington, Va., looking east across the Potomac River. This part of Arlington is now called Rosslyn.



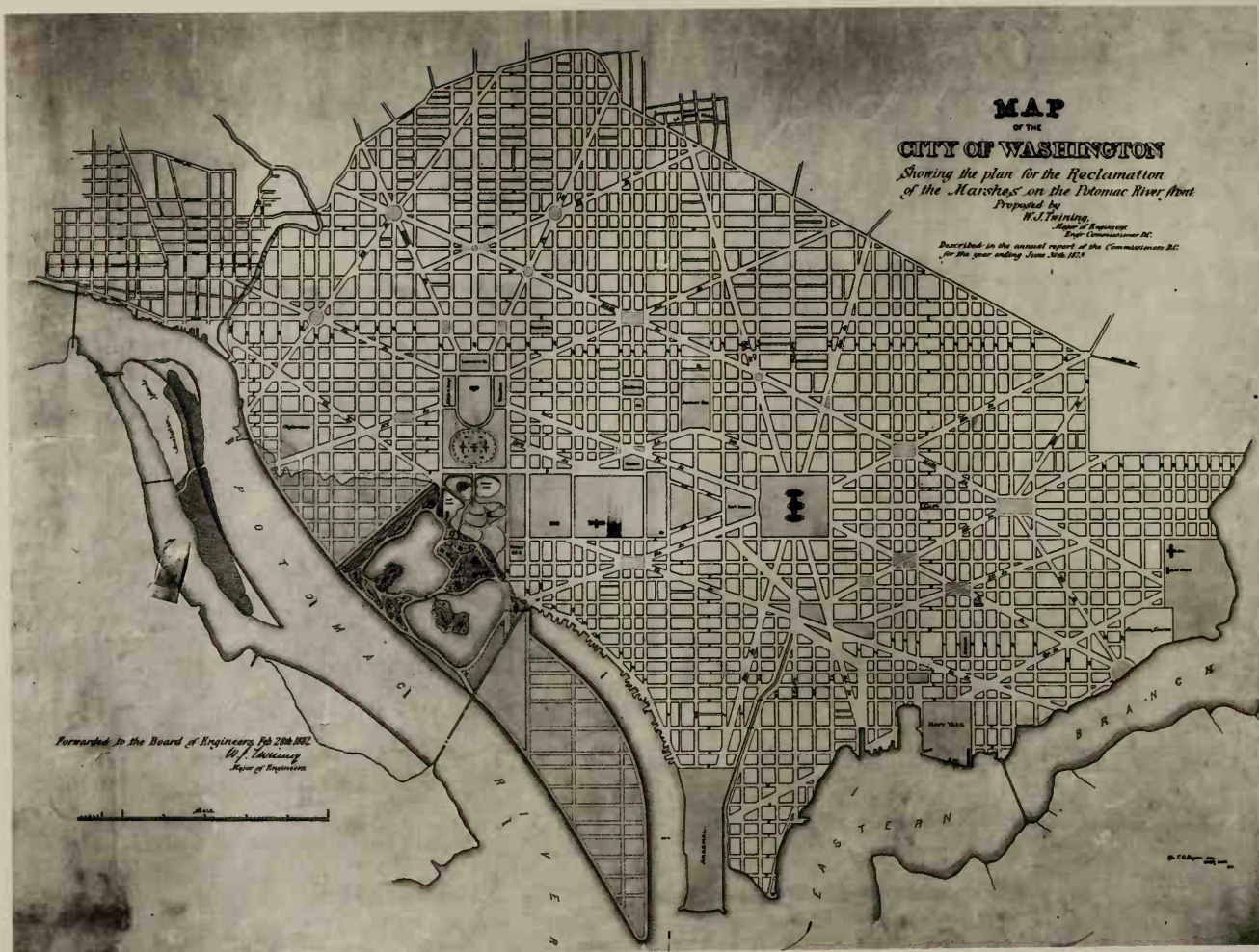
View of the Washington Monument in the 1870s, showing the Department of Agriculture Building (foreground), B Street, now Constitution Avenue (right background), and Potomac marshes at the monument's base. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-G-21H-18).



The completed Washington Monument. The dark band at the lower quarter of the monument shows where construction was resumed after 30 dormant years. It was opened to the public in 1888, four years after its completion.



Photograph of Washington from Arlington, Va. To the left is the turret of the Old Post Office; to the right the Capitol and the Library of Congress.



Map of the City of Washington Showing the plan for Reconstruction of the Marshes on the Potomac River front . . . 1879. Tinted drawing by William T. O. Bruff, Engineering Department. 40 inches by 31 3/4 inches. National Archives, Center for Cartographic and Architectural Archives, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers (F172).



Potomac marshes viewed from the Washington Monument about 1899 showing the Custis-Lee Mansion in Arlington and the future site of Memorial Bridge and the Lincoln Memorial. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Department of Agriculture Collection (6-AD-57).



Above, view of the Potomac Park (future site of the Jefferson Memorial) and the Railroad Bridge at Fourteenth Street, 1898. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. (111-SC-96584). At right, the Jefferson Memorial, dedicated in 1943. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, New York Times Collection (306-NT-966-10).



By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, Washington mirrored many national problems, revealing the effects of careless development and bitter civil war. The grandeur befitting a national capital existed only on paper in a host of unfulfilled designs, and residents realized the capital's future depended on wise planning to satisfy requirements of the federal government and to attract visitors. Many persons familiar with Washington's post-Civil War conditions urged moving the capital to St. Louis or another western city. Congress silenced these voices in 1871 by ordering construction of a building to accommodate the Departments of State, War, and Navy. Originally designed by Thomas U. Walter and later modified by A. B. Mullett, the building was completed in 1888. Hailed as "a poem in stone" and reviled as a monstrosity, the structure at Seventeenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue now houses part of the Executive Office of the President.

In 1872 the city solved one landscape problem and created a new one. The Washington Canal was filled in, eliminating the wretched swampland known as "murderers' row" surrounding the Washington Monument because it was the hangout of Civil War deserters and derelicts. But at the same time Congress gave fourteen acres of public grounds to the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Company, a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Despite angry protests, sooty trains were soon chugging across the Mall at Sixth Street. The entire northwest corner of the tract, facing what is now Constitution Avenue, was turned over

for the station site, and unsightly train sheds stretching southward were a blight on the landscape.

Although railroad concessions defaced the mall, the effects of congressional transportation policies did not always scar the city's profile. An 1882 project initiated to improve navigation of the Potomac actually enhanced the landscape by transforming malarial marshes into six hundred acres of riverside recreational areas. East and West Potomac Parks were formed when the Army Corps of Engineers dredged the river channel and filled in the tidal flats west and south of the Washington Monument.

East Potomac Park, an island parallel to the old Potomac shore, modified the original coastline. The newly deepened Washington Channel between the island and the river bank afforded access to the city's wharves and docks. To the north, West Potomac Park rose where swampy tidal flats once reached the Washington Monument base. Between the two parks, a tidal basin with automatic gates opening at low tide cleared the channel of debris.

The program was substantially completed by 1900, allowing early twentieth-century designers to develop L'Enfant's scheme of symmetrical monuments on the reclaimed land. Today the Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, the White House, and the Jefferson Memorial, with the Washington Monument grounds serving as a pivotal point, punctuate the cross axes in central Washington's composition.



View of the Mall down Sixth Street, N.W., about 1900. The train station tower (center background) was located on the present site of the National Gallery of Art. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-G-23Q-7A).



As the capital approached its one hundredth anniversary, a movement was initiated to capture the dignity originally intended for the Federal City. Michigan Senator James McMillan in March 1901 proposed that the Committee on the District of Columbia submit to the Senate a plan for developing the entire Washington park system. From this beginning grew an elaborate design for beautifying the capital. Four experts—architects Daniel H. Burnham and Charles F. McKim, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, and sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens—were chosen to serve on the McMillan Park Commission. These appointments demonstrated McMillan's real goal: a plan encompassing all of central Washington rather than one confined to a park system. The commission's report as a result included proposals for new House and Senate offices, relandscaped Capitol grounds, and executive offices surrounding the White House. A site was also designated for the Supreme Court, which had occupied the Capitol Building with Congress since 1800.

The commission also renewed L'Enfant's concept of a "grand avenue." The 1901 plan proposed building a public carriageway through the Mall which would be bordered by a National Museum, a new Department of Agriculture Building, and a National Gallery of Art. To restore the visual alignment between the Washington Monument and the Capitol, the plan called for reconstructing the axis between the two structures, thereby creating a new Potomac shoreline from the reclaimed marshes extending to the monument's base. There, on the

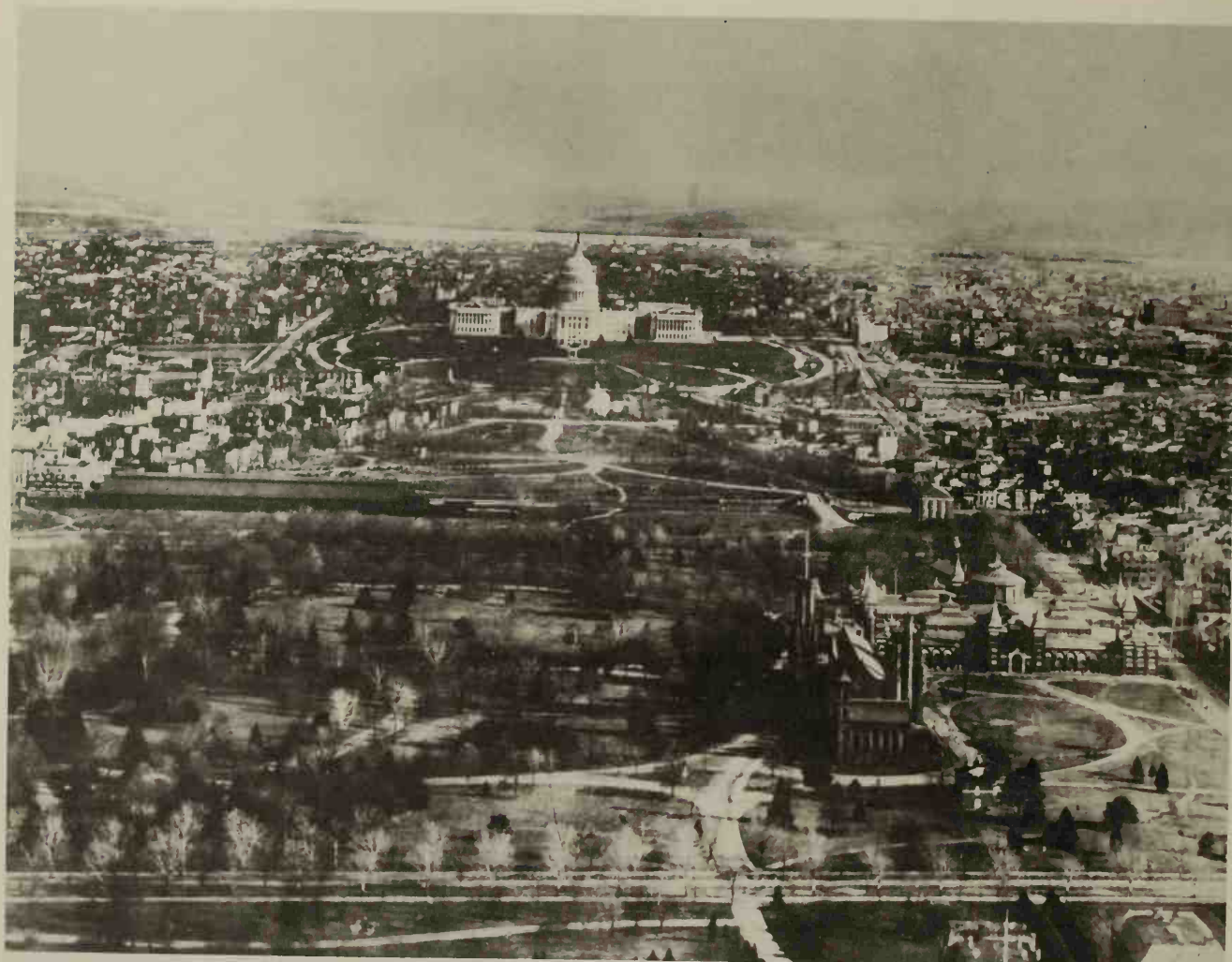
tip of the projected axis, the commission proposed locating a Lincoln Memorial complemented by a riverside drive and a bridge spanning the Potomac to Arlington. Circular pools and cascading gardens counterbalanced the deviation from the Washington Monument's original axis.

Before the Mall's restoration could begin many obstacles had to be overcome. Since gardens stretching from the Capitol to the Potomac were an essential part of the L'Enfant and McMillan plans, the commission realized that the Pennsylvania Railroad must be persuaded to remove its tracks, train sheds and depot. Unexpectedly, the company in 1901 volunteered to withdraw from the area and to collaborate with the commission in constructing Union Station north of the Capitol. The tracks were cleared in 1909.

The Lincoln Memorial site was another vital element in the proposed composition of the Mall. By including this monument in its design, the Park Commission had made the first definite move to secure a location, but twelve years of bitter dispute passed before the plans were finally accepted. During this time persistent efforts were made to overrule the commission by proposing a monument near Union Station or by substituting a memorial highway between Washington and Gettysburg. The Park Commission won the dispute in 1913 when the Lincoln Memorial Act was passed. Built on drained swampland, the memorial designed by Henry Bacon was dedicated in 1922.



Looking northeast from rural Virginia, the familiar profiles of the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the Capitol Building are seen in this 1924 view of Washington. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Secretary of Agriculture (16-AD-37).



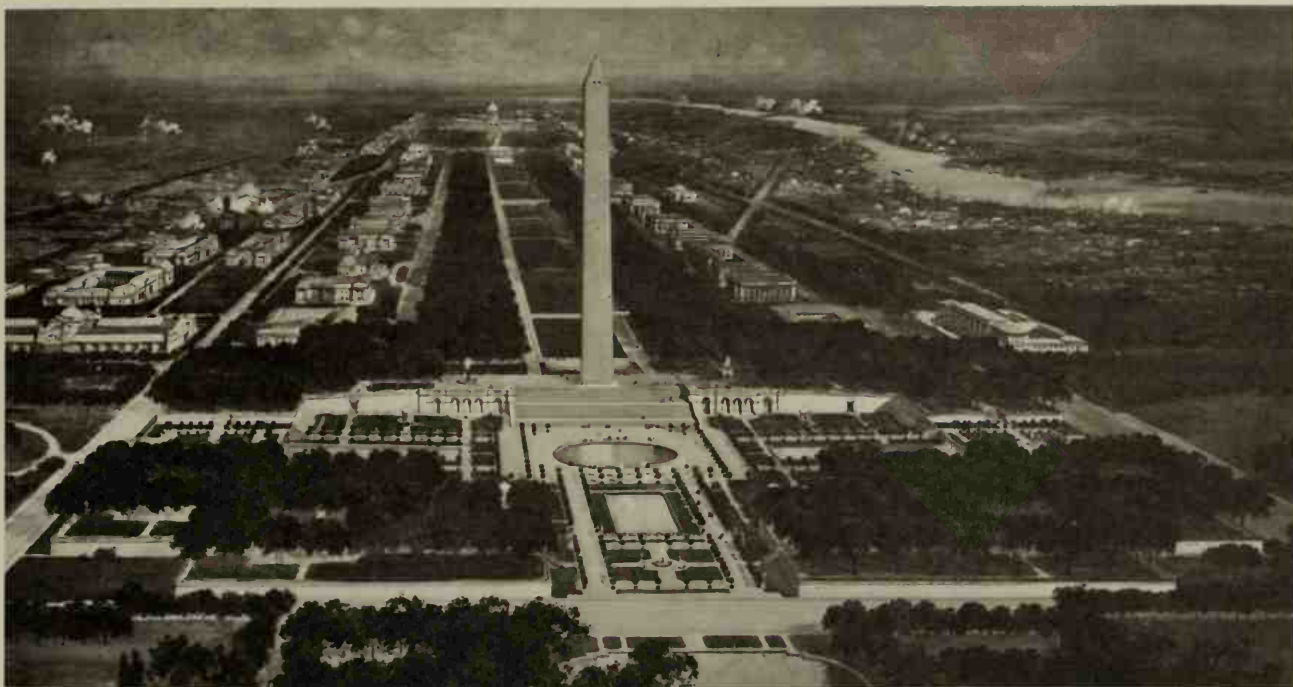
View of the Mall showing the Pennsylvania Railroad's tracks and train sheds, 1900. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-G-23A-6).



Plan for the Capitol grounds, 1901. Original watercolor rendering accompanying the McMillan Park Commission report. Photograph. Commission of Fine Arts.



View of Washington from Arlington, 1901. Original watercolor rendering accompanying the McMillian Park Commission report. Executed by F. L. V. Hoppin, 73 3/8 inches by 35 3/4 inches. Commission of Fine Arts.



Plan for the Washington Monument grounds, 1901.
Original watercolor rendering accompanying the McMillan
Park Commission report. 68 3/4 inches by 38 inches. Com-
mission of Fine Arts.

The outbreak of World War I again interrupted the beautification of Washington. As thousands of defense workers poured into the capital, office space shortages became critical. Flat wooden structures (called temporaries or tempos) rose on public land to ease congestion in government agencies. By the end of the war, the city's appearance was considerably transformed as the squat tempos with their tall, narrow smoke stacks cluttered the Mall grounds between the Capitol and the Washington Monument. In 1940, as the capital again prepared for war, attempts to remove the tempos were frustrated by War Department demands that even more be erected near the Mall. The last few temporary structures occupied by the Navy Department along the Lincoln Memorial's Reflecting Pool were finally removed in 1970.

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Pierre L'Enfant envisioned a capital reflecting the power of the nation, a seat of government embellished with classic-revival structures. In the twentieth century, as the growing federal government demanded facilities for its ever-increasing staff, a practical scheme developed to preserve the idealistic plans. In order to remove federal agencies from the overcrowded tempos, Congress launched the Federal Buildings Program to provide needed office space. The 1926 program, initially directed by Treasury Secretary Andrew W. Mellon, was assisted by the Commission of Fine Arts (established in 1910) and by a board of architectural experts. Congress appropriated funds for purchasing the entire stretch of land known today as the Federal Triangle, bounded by

Fifteenth Street and Constitution and Pennsylvania Avenues to their intersection at Sixth Street.

To make way for federal construction, one of Washington's most thriving landmarks—Center Market—was demolished. Authorized by the city council in 1802, the original market was an untidy collection of stalls that added to the confusion, odor, noise, and filth characterizing the area between Seventh and Eleventh Streets. Here, in addition to produce and meats, men, women, and children were bought and sold until the Compromise of 1850 banned the slave trade in the District. The older market was cleared away in 1870 when a group of businessmen chartered the Washington Market Company and erected a sturdy brick building with modern facilities. Fresh vegetable stands and colorful flower stalls visited daily by statesmen and servants were an integral part of Washington life as the market grew, becoming one of the largest in America. In 1921 Congress transferred administration of this market to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, which operated it as a laboratory for studies in city marketing. In the 1930s, granite buildings housing the Justice Department, the National Archives, and the Federal Trade Commission were erected on the site forming the Federal Triangle apex.



Northwest view of the early Federal Triangle area before the construction of the many buildings pictured at the right.



A more recent view of the same area at left. At the bottom right is the Museum of American History. To the right of the Old Post Office Building turret is the J. Edgar Hoover building. The flat-roofed, windowless building second from the right is the National Archives on Constitution Avenue. Photograph by Charles Suddarth Kelly.



Center Market in the early 1930's on Pennsylvania Avenue. The buildings of the National Archives, the Justice Department, and the Federal Trade Commission now stand on the site. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture. (16-AD-78).



View of the Federal Triangle looking west along Pennsylvania Avenue and construction of the National Archives Building, 1933. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts (66-G-23E-17).



Library of Congress. To the left is a statue of George Washington, which was relocated inside the Capitol. The statue is now in the Smithsonian Institution. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Secretary of Agriculture. (16-AD-42).



National Archives of the United States building. Located on Constitution Avenue between Seventh and Ninth streets. It was completed in 1937.

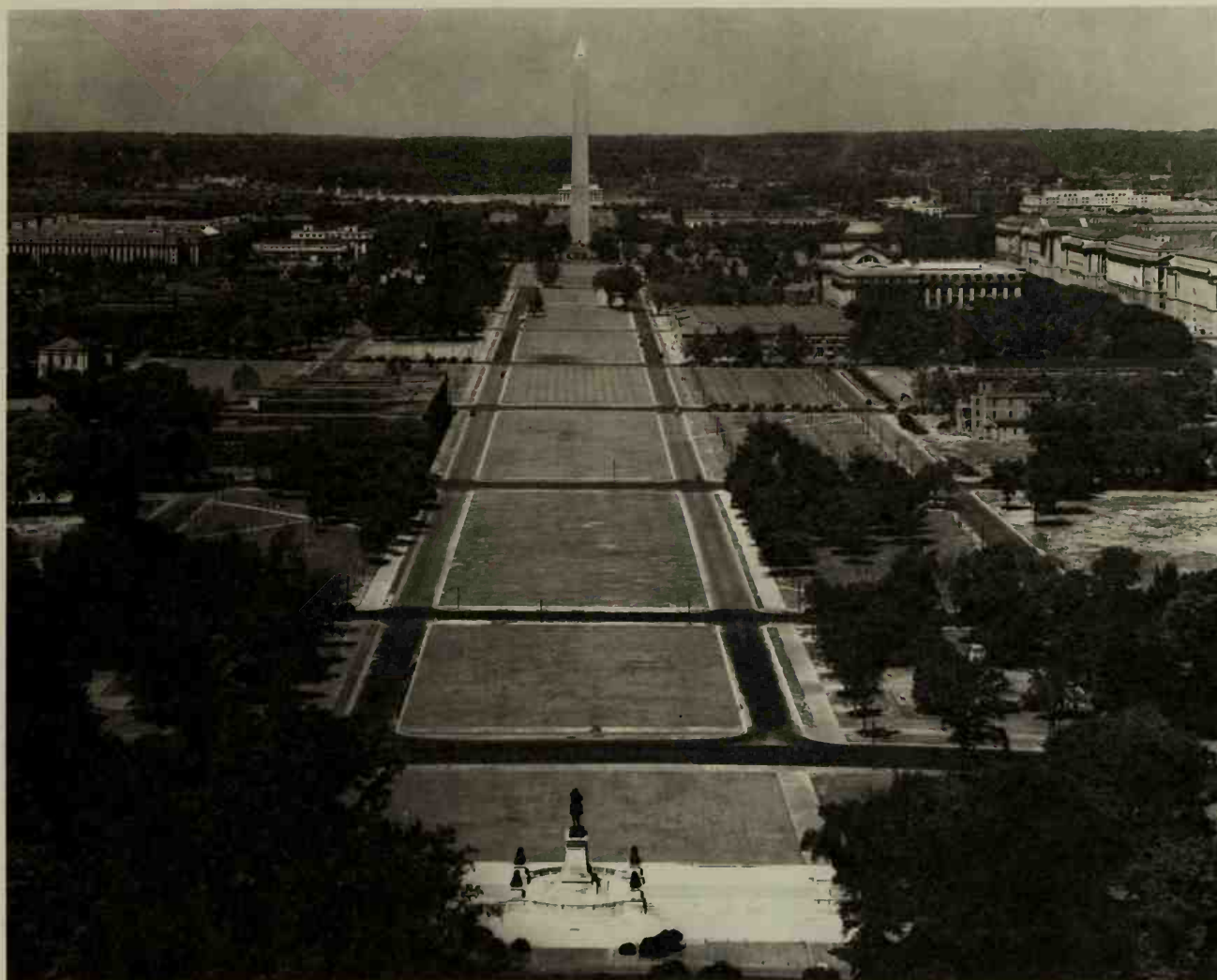


Above, the State, War, and Navy Building, about 1900. It is now named the Old Executive Office Building. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the National Archives and Records Service. (64-AC-7) At right, The Old Evening Star Building, erected in 1898, the building still stands at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Eleventh Street, N.W.





View of the Mall showing temporary buildings, 1933. Memorial Bridge, in the background, leads into Arlington National Cemetery across the Potomac River. National Archives, Audiovisual Archives Division, Records of the Army Air Forces (18-AA-16330).



The Mall, 1936. The building with the small dome, on the right, is the Museum of Natural History. National Archives, Audio Visual Archives Division, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts. (66-G-23Q-11).



View from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial, c. 1930. Temporary buildings dating from the First World War are seen on the north side of the Mall. They were removed during the 1960's. National Archives. Audiovisual Archives Division. Records of the Commission of Fine Arts. (66-HW-210).



West view of the mall showing landscaping done during the 1970's. The redeveloped area at the right is called Constitution Gardens. Photograph by Charles Suddarth Kelly.

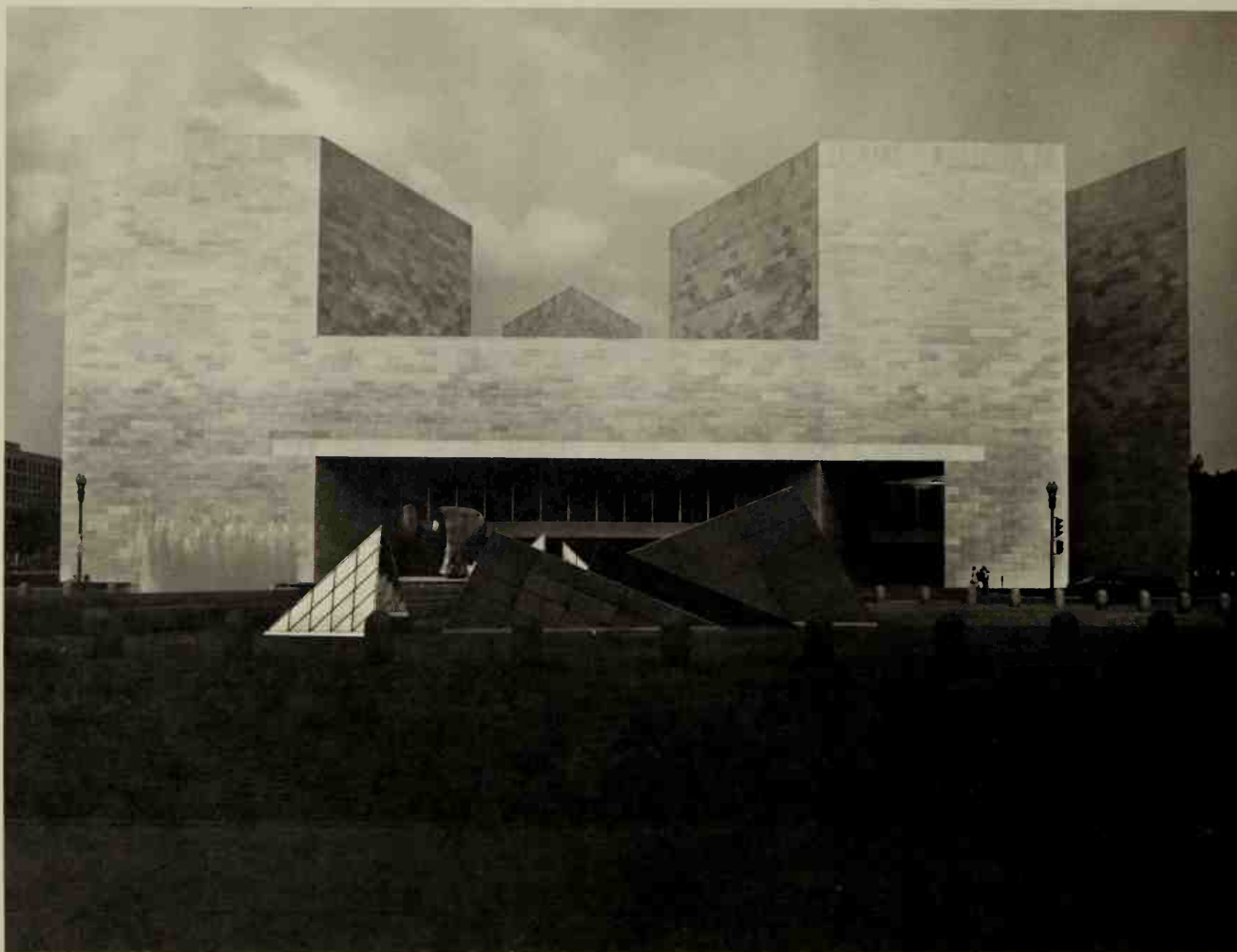


he rambling, muddy village that was once Washington City has been transformed into a bustling, international capital. Nearly two centuries after George Washington and Pierre L'Enfant first explored the wooded valley of Tiber Creek, marble memorials rise in testimony to the nation's heroic heritage. Here a sluggish canal once stagnated and a noisy market flourished; now federal agencies reside in modern, imposing structures. The Capitol, the White House, monuments to past presidents, parks, museums, and avenues are the realization of L'Enfant's dream, for they stand where he long ago envisioned them.

The city has awakened to its special status in the country. Early in the Kennedy administration the president appointed an advisory council to report on the continuing development of Pennsylvania Avenue. Proposed designs included outdoor cafes, shops, theaters, arcaded office and apartment buildings. When completed, the design will assure that the heart of Washington is alive yet impressive and dignified. City designers acknowledge that L'Enfant's goals are still valid and can be a guide for the future. The original plan, surviving the revolutionary changes of past decades, forms the foundation of the Washington we know today.



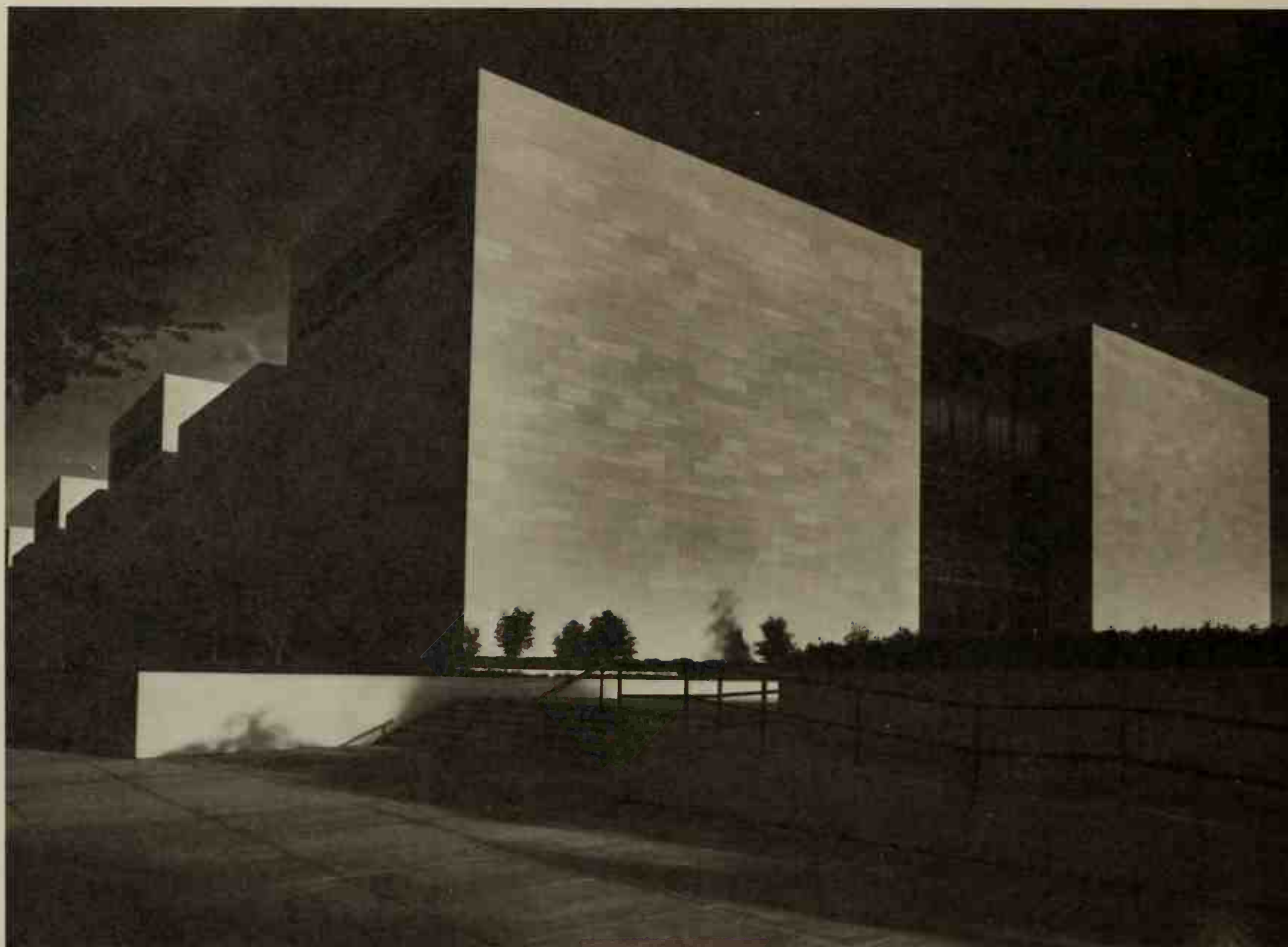
East view of the mall showing development of the mall and more recent museums of the Smithsonian Institution on both sides of the open space. Photograph by Charles Suddarth Kelly.



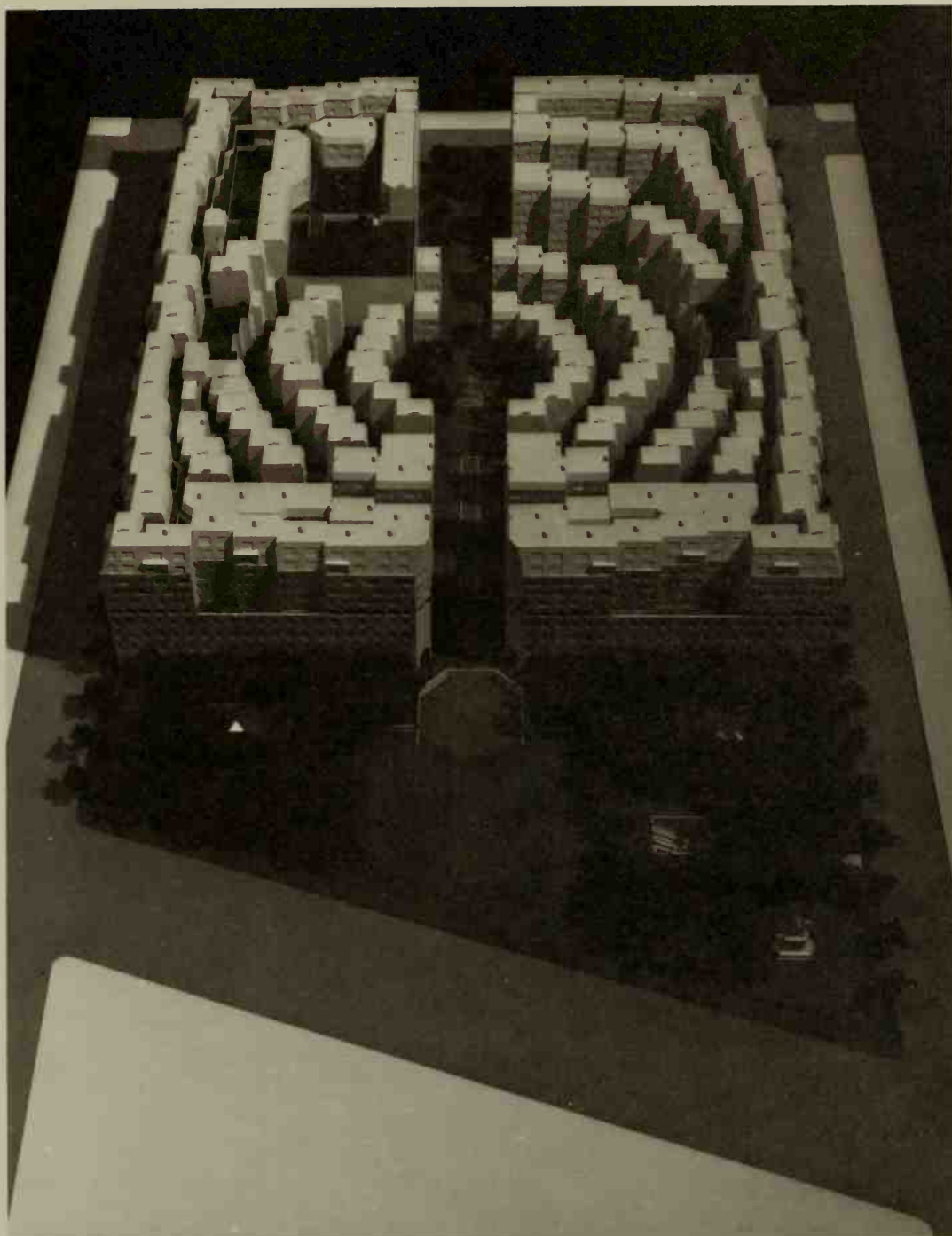
Located where the Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue converge near the foot of Capitol Hill, the East Building of the National Gallery of Art, opened in 1978, conforms to the angle devised in the eighteenth century by Major L'Enfant when he planned to two major faces of the city; one being the Mall, the other joining the White House and the Capitol. Photograph by Hugh Talman, National Archives.



The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden opened in 1974 as part of the Smithsonian Institution. In this distinctive cylindrical structure the Museum houses an extensive collection of paintings and sculptures of well-known and influential artists. Photograph by Hugh Talman, National Archives.



Opened in 1976, the National Air and Space Museum is a national center for the collection, preservation, exhibition, and study of flight. The Museum contains many aircraft and spacecraft that have taken us from Kitty Hawk to the moon and beyond. Photograph by Hugh Talman. National Archives. At right is the proposed Pennsylvania Avenue "superblock," divided in the center by Eighth Street. The development would contain primarily residential structures, along with retail space and private and government offices.





The Metro system carries millions of riders to offices, schools, stores, and recreation centers on both sides of the Potomac River, (opposite page). Metro Center, a major transfer station downtown. Photographs courtesy of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.



